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ART. I.—PRESIDENT HUMPHREY'S ANNUAL SERMON; OR THOUGHTS ON THE PRACTICABILITY OF UNIVERSAL RELIGIOUS EDUCATION, AND THE PECULIAR ADAPTATION OF THE SUNDAY SCHOOL SYSTEM TO EFFECT IT.

The Board of Officers and Managers of the American Sunday School Union were long since satisfied, that the institution intrusted to their care would find friends wherever it should find candid, intelligent, and well-informed minds:—prejudices, strong and inveterate, would of course blind many to its true character;—some would be misled by the wicked and designing, and some would oppose and vilify it because its real object was so manifestly noble and benevolent;—but on the whole, it would follow triumphantly wherever *light* led the way, and would be met with indifference, hostility, or contempt by those who love darkness rather than light.

To diffuse the knowledge and invite the discussion of its principles, it was determined to avail ourselves, annually, of the services of some judicious, enlightened, and elevated man, to examine the subject in all its bearings, and present such views of it as seemed to himself best adapted to illustrate the peculiar excellence of the system, and diffuse most widely its blessings. *Dr. Wayland's* Sermon was the first, and was well calculated to lead the way. It has been extensively circulated; is constantly ordered from every section of the country; has received the approbation of every class and profession of our citizens, and is yet, we trust, to accomplish great good in the cause to which it is devoted.

Rev. Dr. Rice of Virginia was selected as our second preacher, but was unable to officiate in consequence of severe ill health, and has since been called from the service of his

Master on earth, to His blessed presence in glory. *President Humphrey* of Massachusetts, with very little notice, consented to supply his place, and his sermon is before us.

The preacher begins with several very just and striking remarks upon the peculiar character of the age in respect to the facilities of education.

As every science and course of instruction depends, essentially, upon a few elementary principles, and that of Christian education as much as any other, so a familiar acquaintance with these principles is essential. Before we undertake to teach, it is extremely important that we understand the primary laws of thought and feeling; and that we have an intimate acquaintance with the elements which we are to arrange and combine, so as to strengthen every faculty, and to secure the most perfect development of symmetry and beauty. And whatever our ultimate object may be, we must begin at the beginning. We must commence with the simplest combinations, either of characters, substances, thoughts, or affections. This holds true, whether we would construct the most ordinary machine, or measure the height and magnitude of the stars;—whether we would unlock the stores of literature in a foreign language, or fathom the deepest and sweetest wells of our own;—whether, in short, we would, in any way, concentrate and direct the mighty energies either of matter or of mind. He who should wait for his son to understand *Paradise Lost*, before he would teach him the first lesson in two letters; or, who should attempt to bend an oak of fifty circles, would be about as wise, and about as successful, as the parent who should wholly neglect the religious instruction of his children in their tender years, and then undertake to change their habits, and mould their hearts, in the strong maturity of passion and appetite. We must begin the work early, or we shall “labour in vain, and spend our strength for nought and in vain.”

The elements of things never change. The laws both of matter and mind are immutable. What they were three thousand years ago, they were yesterday, and always will be. The same intellectual and moral cultivation which was needful then, is required now. The same motion which swayed the reason and the conscience before the Christian era, or before the flood, would, in like circumstances, sway it still. And the same course of instruction and discipline which formed a good moral and religious character in the time of Solomon, would produce similar results at any other time. If it was then true, that children trained up in the right way, would not depart from it, it is still true, and will be in every coming age. For the young mind and the young heart are every where alike. Children are just what they always have been. They have the same constitution, the same physical, intellectual, and moral susceptibilities; the same bias to evil; the same plastic nature; and they may, by the blessing of God, on early and pious training, be moulded into the same virtuous habits.

And what is true of one child, at any given time, is true of a thousand, or a million. The meaning of the text, obviously, is not, train up *this* child, or *that* child, but train up *any* child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it. Here and there a mournful exception there possibly might be. One child in an age, or a country, thus piously educated, might possibly bring down a father's gray hairs with sorrow to the grave; but if the earth should consent to bear one such reprobate upon a thousand leagues of its surface, the general rule would not be affected.

President H. selects as a theme of remark the familiar declaration of the wisest of men—

Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it.

And he justly observes—

That hardly any thing is more difficult than to incorporate the conviction with our settled habits of thinking and acting, that the most common and familiar truths are often the most important. They are like household faces and voices, which strike us the less, for having been with us from our childhood.

What words, he inquires,

Were ever more fitly spoken by mortal lips; and yet have these “apples of gold in pictures of silver,” so long been familiar to our eyes, that we little think of their intrinsic and inestimable value.

In the prosecution of his subject, the preacher proposes to answer the following interesting inquiries:

What it is to train up a child in the way he should go?

How it is that such training forms a permanently virtuous and pious character? And,

How the whole youthful population of our country may be thus piously educated?

We trust the reader will be willing to follow him at some length in his answers.

What is it to train up a child in the way he should go? Here a few preliminary observations will, if I mistake not, lead to a clear and satisfactory answer. The elements, or first principles of education, and indeed of all science, and all things, are extremely simple. We know, for example, that the sublime, and almost incredible discoveries of modern astronomy, are based upon numbers, lines, and angles, which are familiar to a little child. How few and simple, too, are the substances which constitute this great globe, with all its solid ground and restless waters; its smothered fires and teeming population! The philosophy of mind, so wonderful, so illimitable, so godlike—what are its elements but the simplest thoughts and perceptions imaginable! And the science of morals, reaching, as it does, from earth to heaven, from the lowly cottage up to the “throne of God and the Lamb,” on what does it rest, but the simple principle of love!

One of the most striking characteristics of the present age is *simplification*. Almost all our improvements in mechanics, in the arts, in the use of natural agents, and in the science of education, consist in the discovery and application of more simple principles than had before been observed. Hardly a month passes without some new invention, or discovery, by which power is gained, or dispensed with; and by which human labour is rendered at once more perfect and more productive. And who can look at these great benevolent institutions, which are the glory of the present age, without being struck with the simplicity of their principles; with the unparalleled extent and efficiency of their operations? How much more is done to enlighten and save mankind, than the world ever dreamed of, till the current century, and with how little comparative cost! It is sufficient, here, just to name the American Bible Society, the American Tract Society, and the American Sunday School Union, which now holds its seventh and brightest anniversary. Who would have believed, thirty years ago, that so many denominations of Christians could ever be brought to meet on common ground, in any such great

society; or that so many millions of people could be furnished with the means of improvement in knowledge and piety, with so much ease, and so little expense! Verily, "it is the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes."

But while we speak of these and other astonishing improvements, in so many departments of Christian benevolence, let us not credit ourselves with inventions which are as old as the Bible itself. A little reflection will be sufficient to convince any man, that we have discovered no new principles in morals, or religion—in the spread of the gospel, or in Christian education. In all our plans for doing good, we are only approximating to the divine simplicity of that perfect compend, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and thy neighbour as thyself." Our Foreign and Home Missionary Societies, what are they doing, but in simple obedience to the command, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature? All our Bible and Tract Societies, what are they employed about, but just scattering abroad those leaves of the tree of life, "which are for the healing of the nations?" And this great and prosperous Union, what is it doing, what can it ever do more than is implied in these few monosyllables, *Train up a child in the way he should go*? As there never was a more simple plan thought of for renovating the world, so none could be more comprehensive, or effectual. Let it once be thoroughly tried, in any state or nation, with a humble reliance on the grace of God,—that is, let every child be trained up from infancy in the right way, and how wonderful would be the moral transformation in the space of forty years! Let the same thing be done every where, and how soon would there be "new heavens and a new earth!"

What then is it to train up a child in the way he should go? The general import of the term is perfectly obvious. To *train*, is to draw from act to act, by a skilful influence—to form to any practice by exercise—to invite, allure, educate, bring up; or, as it is in the margin of the text, to *catechise*. Thus, a young horse, or bullock, is *trained* when he is gradually brought under subjection to his master, or when he is made docile, trusty, and useful. A soldier is *trained* for active service, when he is taught the art of war by an experienced officer, and is by degrees inured to hardships and dangers.

A child is *trained*, when, instead of being left to grow up in ignorance, and follow his own inclinations, he is brought under the influence of instruction and persuasion—of mental and moral discipline. And he is trained up in the *way he should go*, when he receives a pious education, commencing with the dawn of intellect, and continued till his character is formed and settled;—when his wayward propensities are watched and checked in their earliest manifestations;—when his opening mind is carefully imbued with moral and religious truth;—when his conscience is exercised to a quick discernment of right and wrong;—when his heart is made habitually to feel the presence of high and holy motives;—when the budding of every kindly affection is cherished by the breath of prayer; and when, in fine, virtuous habits of thought, of feeling, and of action, are gradually consolidated into great and abiding moral principles.

If the process is not begun early; if any one thing is neglected; if the parent, or other religious teacher, is incompetent, or unfaithful; if the system of religious education is not carried out; if, in religion, any aliment but the "sincere milk of the word," is offered and received; and if the best instructions are counteracted by bad examples in the family, or in the school, then the child is not trained up in the way he should go. He may be taught to read ever so early; he may be put under the tuition of the ablest masters, in every branch of science and literature; he may outstrip all his companions in mental discipline and attainments; he may, in a popular sense, receive a finished education, and yet not be educated at all in the sense of my text.

"The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge." Whatever other advantages any child may enjoy, it is only when he is treated as a moral and accountable being; it is only when the truths of the Bible are laid at the foundation of all his attainments; it is only when he is taught "to fear God and keep his commandments," that he is trained up in the way he should go. It is a thorough Christian education alone, which can secure our children from vice and ruin; which can guide their feet in "the ways of pleasantness and the paths of peace."

The manner in which our various habits of thought and feeling are acquired—the analogies which nature furnishes—the fallacy of inferences from past failures, and the vast importance of giving to religion the first place in any system of education, next claim the preacher's attention.

There is something in the power of habit, over all our faculties, whether bodily, intellectual, or moral, which I do not pretend to comprehend, and which I shall not therefore attempt to explain. The facts in the case are undeniable. Nothing is better settled than that the frequent repetition of any physical act, or mental process, begets an aptitude for the same thing, which it is extremely difficult to overcome. The unconquerable despotism of bad habits is proverbial. "Can the Ethiopian change his skin, or the leopard his spots, then may ye also do good, that are accustomed to do evil." The same is true of good and virtuous habits, though not in so high a degree. I am far from believing, that there are any blank leaves in the book of human nature, even at the beginning of it. Many a dark and crooked line appears upon the opening of the very first page. But still there is room to write the law of God upon it, and by the use of proper means, the law of sin may be gradually obliterated. What I mean to say is this: God has so made us, such is the constitution of the human mind, (notwithstanding the terrible blot of innate depravity, which nothing but his Spirit can ever wipe out,) that, under suitable instruction, a virtuous character may be formed, which will stand the shock, at least of ordinary temptations. This is what I call the *natural* effect of right training upon the mind; and in this view of the subject, I am borne out by a great many striking analogies. The world is full of them. While the clay is soft, you can mould it into what form you choose. You bend the sapling of a year's growth with perfect ease; and in becoming a great tree, it most obediently follows the direction which your finger gave it half a century ago. Wherever a stream first begins to flow, there it cuts a channel for itself, and there it is likely to flow for ever. And so it is with the infant mind. First impressions are deep and permanent. Every early bias has a prodigious influence upon the future character. When these biases are in a right direction, they grow and ripen into good habits; and the man thenceforth travels on in the path of rectitude and happiness.

But while I lay so much stress upon the *natural* force of a religious education, I am fully aware, that this can never be our chief reliance. "The carnal mind is enmity against God." It is so in our children at the tenderest age. "They go astray as soon as they are born, speaking lies." The most pious education can never reconcile them to God. It is the Holy Spirit, alone, which can "put his law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts." This is the only perfect security. Now, whether every child in the land would be savingly converted, if all were trained up in the right way, I do not certainly know; but I feel quite sure, that nobody can prove the contrary. Is it too much to affirm that the experiment of what, by the blessing of God, might be accomplished in this way, has never yet been

tried, even upon a small scale? How many children in the world, think ye, have ever yet received as good a Christian education as it is possible to give! What if your children, or mine, have grown up under our care without being born again? What does this prove, but our own unfaithfulness? Is God slack concerning his promises? Is not the time coming, when all shall know him, from the least to the greatest? And who can tell, but that during the millenium, every child will be converted, either in its mother's arms, or in the Sabbath School?

But however this may be, no one who believes the word of God, or gives any heed to the testimony of experience and observation, will question the vast importance of early religious instruction. An insatiable and prying curiosity may exhaust itself in trying to explain *how* it is, that early training produces such mighty results; and "some man" may, if he chooses, declare that he will never believe what he cannot comprehend: but with the text and the facts before us, the path of duty is perfectly plain. We are just as much bound and encouraged to co-operate in promoting the great cause of Christian education, as if we could see every secret step of the process by which virtuous and pious habits are formed.

Under the third inquiry, a field of thought and remark is opened, to which we can assign no bounds. We talk about the destinies of our country—about our prospects and dangers—our multiplied and constantly multiplying sources of prosperity, and our unlimited means of advancement and improvement in our intellectual, moral, and physical character,—but who thinks of the unobserved and almost insensible influences by which all these destinies and prospects are governed? Who thinks of the formation of character in the obscure and comfortless abode of poverty; in the common school room, and in the daily intercourse of life? who thinks of the silent force of example in every rank and pursuit?

THE GENERATIONS OF MEN ARE EDUCATED IN SILENCE, and he who regards systems of public education, and the diffusion of intelligence by means of common schools, while he overlooks the silent influence of private, domestic associations, is as a man who gazes at a ship seemingly becalmed, while an *under-current*, which no human power can oppose or obviate, may be driving her with fearful rapidity upon the rocks. The course and power of these *under-currents* of society should be familiar to those who have any concern with popular systems of education, and especially with the teachers and friends of Sunday Schools. Dr. H. thinks, very justly, that little comparatively is to be expected from domestic education, although some are even now disposed to abandon Sunday Schools in favour of parental instruction.

There is obviously one way in which the blessings of religious education *might* be extended to every family in the United States, without the least difficulty, were the natural guardians of the young qualified for the responsible and endearing relations which they sustain. It undoubtedly devolves upon parents, first and chiefly, to train up their children in the way they

should go; to begin the work at early dawn, and to carry it forward with many prayers, till "Christ be formed in them the hope of glory." Were fathers and mothers all enlightened and devoted Christians, (as they ought to be,) no child would be neglected. Under the cultivation which this universal piety would ensure, a transforming power would operate silently, but mightily, upon all the young millions of our country's hopes. Even then, "helps" might, no doubt, be highly useful. Parents might need assistance in carrying forward to maturity the best systems of religious education. Many certainly would.

But how much more is foreign aid called for, in the existing state of things. What an awful dearth of piety is there, at the head of more than a million and a half of American families! From this quarter, then, a religious influence upon all who are now coming forward into life, with the destinies of the nation in their hands, is hopeless. Not one third part of them will ever be brought up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, by those who gave them life. Must they then be left to grow up in ignorance and sin, and to pull down the pillars of the state upon their devoted heads? You promptly answer, No. Instant, and loud voices, from every quarter of this great and prosperous city, answer, No! All the managers, and central committees, and agents, and power-presses, and depositories of this heaven-born Union, answer, No! All the Sabbath School libraries in the land, and more than sixty thousand teachers, answer, no! And soon will the whole American Church, with a voice like the sound of many waters, answer, NO!

This leads the preacher to an examination of the Sunday School as a system of *popular* religious education, and to a particular consideration of the character and claims of the American Sunday School Union.

Here, in this blessed Union of hearts and hands, of counsels and prayers—in this flowing together of the waters of life from so many different sanctuaries, I see a pledge that every child in the city and the country, on the sea-board and by the great rivers of the west, shall be sought out, and have the opportunity of being instructed "in the right way of the Lord." Did the time permit, and were it necessary, I might here trace the history of this holy American Union, from its precarious infancy to the lifting up of its head among the stars. I might speak of its early struggles, and its recent triumphs of its faith and its works—of the destitute regions which it has explored—of the thrilling appeals which have gone forth from the fulness of its heart—of the four hundred and fifty thousand children now in its schools—of the vast multitude of books which it has published—of the incalculable amount of good which it hath already accomplished, and of its noble resolution, at the last anniversary, *to supply the Valley of the Mississippi with Sabbath Schools in two years.*

But it as little needs the eulogy as the defence of my feeble voice. It has excited the admiration, and kindled the eloquence of the statesman, as well as the divine. Mightier voices never thundered in our National Capitol, than have spoken its praises. Wherever its name is mentioned, the distinctions of party and sect are at once forgotten; and on a memorable, recent occasion, we have seen "the north give up, while the south kept not back." And then it was that the wrestling of the giants gave place to exalted moral reasonings, and mutual congratulations. But what is more than all, the character and deeds of this blessed union are "written, not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God; not in tables of stone, but in fleshly tables of the heart." Its record is on high. Its all-comprehensive and sweet benevolence is reflected from nearly half a million of happy faces every Sabbath day, and

gratefully acknowledged by as many tongues. What it needs, is not the approving testimony of a humble individual, from the place which I now occupy, but the zealous co-operation of all the friends of religion, and of our free institutions; and above all, the continued smiles of Heaven upon its counsels and its labours.

I shall therefore just glance at the principles of the Union; its admirable adaptation to the religious wants of our country, and the genius of our governments; and then press the duty of sustaining it, and of extending its operations upon every class of American citizens. It is the glory of this institution, that it belongs to no religious party, or sect. Here all minor differences of opinion are merged in the acknowledged principles of a common faith, and yet so as to leave each denomination at full liberty to inculcate its distinctive views upon all the children of its connexion. Thus, while each tribe in our Israel retains its own standard, all the tribes are represented in the blended studding of one common breastplate; and all move on together under His banner, "who was with the church in the wilderness." The objects of the Union, as expressed in the first article of the Constitution, are, "To concentrate the efforts of Sabbath School societies in different sections of our country—to strengthen the hands of the friends of religious instruction, on the Lord's day—to disseminate useful information, circulate moral and religious publications in every part of the land; and to endeavour to plant a Sunday School wherever there is a population." These objects are worthy of that enlightened benevolence which founded this noble institution, and cannot fail of securing the approbation of every Christian, and every patriot. The obvious design of the system is, to pre-occupy the infant mind, throughout this great republic, with the principles of virtue and piety—to sow the good seed, and keep out the tares—to teach all the rising millions of a mighty empire, as they come up successively into life, their relations to God, their high duties, and their immortal destiny. It is, to enlighten the understanding and educate the heart—to make virtuous and happy families and neighbourhoods—to make good men and good citizens—good rulers—good and loyal subjects of the King of heaven; and, as a matter of course, good and peaceable subjects of a republican government. The design of the American Sunday School Union is, to send abroad a moral power which shall quench all the remaining fires of intemperance, and lock up every gaming-house, and theatre, and brothel; and transform the whole army of drunkards and paupers into useful and independent members of society. It is, as soon as possible, to tear up every criminal docket, stop all profane swearing, slander, and cheating. It is, to rescue the Sabbath from every kind of profanation, and to inculcate upon the young, every truth, and every duty, that is found in the Bible. The grand design of this institution, in short, is, to empty the prisons and fill the churches, to expel misery and crime in every form from the land; to spread pure and undefiled religion over all the east, and west, and north, and south; and to train up our whole population for the kingdom of heaven. Such is the undisguised, the godlike design of the American union.

And need I stop to show how admirably, how perfectly, it is adapted to the wants of our country and the character of our free institutions? Whose soul does not kindle within him, when he thinks of what has already been done by this institution, and of what it is now doing in every corner of the land?—How it seeks out the poor and the ignorant, and by bringing them together every week within the Sabbath-school, with children of better circumstances, introduces them into a new world of thought, and feeling, and moral influence. How it every where offers to adopt the fatherless, and to assist the widow in training up her family for usefulness, and for glory. How its instructions "drop as the rain, and distil as the dew; as the small rain upon the tender herb, and as the showers upon the grass." How like an

angel of mercy, it visits where the Bible is scarcely known, and no morning or evening sacrifice goes up, and no pious counsel ever flows from parental lips; and how it allures the little strangers to God whom it finds in these abodes of moral death, and turns their feet into the path of life.

Now, is any thing wanting, but just to extend the blessings of this divine charity, and establish an efficient Sabbath-school wherever there are children to be trained up in the way they should go? Would not the other means of grace and salvation follow almost of course? The Bible would certainly be there; nor would it be in the power of the prince of darkness himself to keep out the heralds of the cross. No village, or scattered settlement, that is once brought under the heavenly influence of faithful Sabbath-school instruction, will ever consent to live without a preached gospel.

Need I speak of the cheapness of this system of religious education? When once fairly introduced, how trifling is the expense? Who, of all the sixty thousand teachers now employed, desires, or would consent to receive any pecuniary compensation? Which of them does not reap a rich reward in his own improvement, and in the pleasure of doing good? Never was so much labour performed so cheerfully, so faithfully, and so productively, for nothing. The contingent expenses of so great an institution must indeed be large. So vast a territory as ours cannot be explored and organized, but by the employment of many agents; and Sabbath-school libraries cost something. But who, in the last age, would have believed it possible to purchase as much entertaining and useful reading for an hundred dollars, as can now be had for thirty? I confess that I am astonished when I look into your depository and ask the prices of your publications. That congregation, or settlement, must be poor indeed, which cannot afford to procure a handsome library.

Of the happy adaptation of this wonder-working system to the genius of our free institutions, but little need be said. It must strike the eye and the heart of every enlightened patriot at a glance. Our government is not a government of force, but of influence. Its only sure basis is the virtue and piety of the people. In the absence of these, should Heaven in its wrath, ever visit us with so dark a day, it must inevitably fall. When it is gone, you may plant the soil on which it stood with swords and bayonets; you may compel a degenerate race to cringe at the foot of a throne; and you may proudly construct the monuments of national servitude, with cannon upon the battle field; but without the living principle of moral rectitude, in the mass of the people, no country can long be free and happy.

Now the American Sunday School Union offers to provide the very security which is wanted, by carrying the blessings of religious education into every family; by planting the seeds of piety in every tender mind; by extending its adoption to every abode of moral orphanage; and by giving its pledge, that, with God's blessing, the whole rising intellect and heart of our country shall be taught to fear God and keep his commandments. This is what the wisest and best of our statesmen, as well as ministers of the gospel propose to do. Here are Moses and Aaron united in counsel and in labour, for the common good. Here is the true American union, of which no Christian, and no patriot can ever be ashamed. It is the glory and safety of our country. It is an union which gives its money, gives its time, gives its influence; and strives, in its daily prayers, to raise up good Christians and good ministers—good citizens and good rulers. It is such an union as was witnessed when Aaron and Hur held up the hands of Moses in the battle. An union of intelligence, public spirit and deep moral principle, in all the members of the community, which insures a conscientious obedience to the laws. That sort of union which makes every patriot a Christian, and every Christian a patriot. That union,

in fine, which exists where all the members of a great family "love one another with a pure heart, fervently."

This, I hardly need to say, is the only union of religion and civil government which the friends of Sabbath-schools desire, or would consent to. For this they "long, for this they pray." And may such an union of hearts and minds, in all that can promote the public welfare, be speedily consummated by the universal prevalence of true religion. May the essential principles of the Bible be thus graven on every youthful heart, and may its life-giving spirit so thoroughly pervade all our institutions, as to animate them with a sound and enduring vitality."

These are evidently the views of a man who has studied the character, observed the influence, and marked the progress of Sunday Schools. They are convictions which no one can avoid who looks at this system of instruction as a Christian, or as a philosopher. They are positions which are abundantly sustained by the history of Sunday Schools in this country, where alone they have been principally regarded as schools of exclusive religious instruction; and we have no doubt that evidence is accumulating every day and every hour, to show that without some such system of popular religious education, the great mass of the community would be without moral culture: and with such supervision as the Sunday School provides over moral, intellectual, and social character, with the free use of a library, judiciously selected and circulated through the neighbourhood—in the study of a text book, gratuitously furnished, of such universal interest and value as the Bible—under the tuition of those whose services are entirely voluntary and uncompensated, and rendered, in the judgment of charity, from the most benevolent and honourable motives—in a room which is built and furnished for other purposes, with which the Sunday School does not interfere—and on a day when neither teacher nor pupils could be prosecuting worldly business without a violation of human and divine law—and all designed and calculated to qualify them to serve their generation in the fear of God, in all the relations of life, and to prepare them for perfect and endless glory, when all these things shall be dissolved—we venture to declare the Sunday School the cheapest, the most efficient, and the most rational system of education which the wit of man has ever devised.

After showing the practicability of religiously educating a generation, if the time and means are fitly chosen, the preacher proceeds to exhibit and enforce the duty of various classes of society.

But to this end, parents, teachers, ministers, churches, and all who either love God, or their country, have a great work to do. While the American Sunday School Union must rely supremely upon Heaven for support and suc-

cess, *subordinately*, it "lives, and moves, and has its being" in the favour of the people, especially of the pious, benevolent, and influential classes. To such, then, let me earnestly appeal on the present occasion. And,

First, to parents of every communion, and every rank in society. Consider your responsibility, and accept the aid which is proffered you, in the religious education of your children. Sabbath-schools can nowhere exist, but by your permission and countenance. If you smile, they live; but under your frown they must die. For whom do so many teachers and superintendents ask the privilege of toiling, and often under great bodily exhaustion, from Sabbath to Sabbath, and year to year! Is it for themselves, or for you, and those whom God hath given you? And will you not bid them God speed—will you not help them? For whom did Christ die? Was it not for your children, and will you not bring them to him in the Sabbath school, that he may there take them up in his arms and bless them, as he has blessed thousands of others?

But here let me earnestly caution you against devolving the whole business of religious education upon others, as if their readiness to assist you could ever excuse you from the duties of catechizing, and other family instruction. I greatly fear, that even many Christian parents are in fault here; and I do know, that some devoted teachers have almost doubted, on this account, whether their labours were of much use.

To those of you, my friends, who give your time and thoughts to this great work, as superintendents and teachers, much more might be said by way of encouragement, exhortation, and advice, than the time will permit. Where then shall I begin? Shall I speak of *duty* as the constraining motive to action and perseverance? The theme before us, no doubt, is fruitful of such arguments and appeals, beyond almost any other. But the word *duty* is too cold—it has too little heart for such an enterprise as that in which you are engaged. It is a word which I am persuaded cannot be found in the vocabulary of heaven, and the sooner we can make it obsolete on earth, the better. How strangely would it sound, to say that the angels serve God day and night in his upper temple, because they think it their duty to serve him! And surely it is high time, for the *church*, at least, to emigrate from the polar circles of Christianity, and move nearer to the sun. To love God and Christ, and the souls of men, is a very different thing from being convinced that it is our *duty* to love them. So to teach and pray in the Sabbath school, under the constraining influence of *love*, is heaven-wide from any emotion which a mere sense of duty can excite. Need I undertake to show you what a privilege it is, to be a Sabbath-school teacher, and would be to the greatest man in the world?

Suppose, then, for a moment, that you could summon around you, every Lord's day, some of the most prosperous and influential men of business—some of the most devoted and useful preachers of the gospel—some of the ablest advocates and judges, and some of the most distinguished legislators of our country? Suppose you could do this as easily as you can now call your classes together, and could open the Bible before them, and impress its great truths upon their hearts and consciences, and give a permanent shape to their whole character? Would you not esteem it an honour and a privilege? And could you possibly exert so mighty an influence in any other way?

Well then, what are the facts in the case? Have you not actually before you, every Sabbath, some of the future ministers of the church, and rulers of the country? Some of the great merchants and bankers, jurists, legislators, and physicians of the next forty years? That little boy, who now listens to you with so much interest, and whose heart and intellect you are helping to fashion, will one day preach the everlasting gospel to the Hindoos,

or the Chinese. And that other lad whom you found in a cellar, and allured to your school-room, will, in your own lifetime, be at the head of business in your city. Among those whose characters you are forming, on the eternal basis of Scriptural truth, one may be a Howard, another a Martyn; one a Whitfield, and another a Robert Hall, or Jonathan Edwards. That little child now at the head of his class, may become another Franklin, or he may hereafter sit upon the bench of the Supreme Court, or he may one day be President of the United States!

What an influence! What an advantage, to have the first training of the young idea, and to direct the moral power of a great nation! The thought is prodigious. And yet it simply represents the actual prerogative of Sabbath-school teachers, wherever the system of the American Sunday School Union shall be carried into full and complete effect. Nor is your influence, as teachers, at an end: nay, it has produced its grandest results when it is seen, not only in all the common walks of life, but in the high places of society—holding the awful balance of justice; wielding the powers of argument and persuasion; presiding over all the civil rights and institutions of a great people; and shining in the golden candlesticks of the church. It is your higher privilege to assist in training up your classes “for glory, and honour and immortality—in making them kings and priests unto God and the Lamb.” What power to do good! What honour conferred upon every faithful teacher, and need I add, what amazing responsibility is here!

Ministers of Christ! heard ye that voice, in the hour of your consecration, “Feed my lambs?” How much the prosperity of this glorious cause depends upon your faithfulness, upon your influence! To say that it cannot go on “unto perfection” without you, is almost to say, that if it fails, or languishes, you must answer for it. On you it devolves to *teach* the *teachers*, as well as the children of your respective charges—to counsel and encourage them in their arduous duties—to visit all the people in your congregations, and persuade them if possible, to send every child to the Sabbath-school, as soon as it is capable of receiving religious instruction, and to exercise a general supervision over this blessed system of benevolence.

While the control of the American Sunday School Union, in all its vast operations, is very properly placed exclusively in the hands of laymen, they expect, they ask, I might almost say, they *implore* your zealous and powerful co-operation. Surely, my beloved brethren, you will not disappoint them. You will not stand aloof from so glorious an enterprize. As your humble representative, I venture to pledge for you. ’Tis done. Methinks the pledge is already taken down by the recording angel. Does any one object to the record? Let him say so, and ere it is dry, let him send up his petition that his name may be blotted out of the book!

When you look over the immense field which is to be explored and occupied by the American Sunday School Union, and behold what wide regions of moral desolation there are in our country, I am sure, dear brethren, you will not think it enough to watch over the young of your own flocks, and to see that they are fed “with the sincere milk of the word, that they may grow thereby.” You will also look after the sheep which are scattered over those vast regions, where there are no “green pastures and no still waters.” Like the good Shepherd, you will “gather the lambs with your arms, and carry them in your bosoms.” You will not rest till a fold is prepared, or, in other words, till a Sabbath-school is opened in every place of tents, throughout all the hundred wildernesses within our national borders. And as this great, this simple, this magnificent system of religious education extends its cheering influence, and “the desert blossoms as a rose,” and you eagerly press on from every quarter, till you meet in the midst of one immense garden of the

Lord, oh then, how loud, and how joyful will your shouting be, "Grace, grace unto it!"

Men of wealth—men of talent and influence—ye honoured civil fathers of the republic, my next appeal is to you. The managers of this glorious Union want all the aid you can give them, in extending the circle of its blessings. They thank you for what you have already done, and they ask you still to help them train up those rising millions, who are so soon to govern this great nation according to their pleasure—who will either keep the gallant ship in deep and peaceful waters, or dash her in pieces amid the foaming breakers.

Will you allow me to say, that there never was a more delusive, a more baseless vision, than that which has dazzled even some great minds, respecting the means and agents upon which the preservation of our liberties essentially depends. Every thing is to be accomplished, as they seem to suppose, by the combined influence of popular education and free constitutions of civil government. Their theory is, that as we are now in possession of the freest and best institutions in the world, we have only to keep the people enlightened in regard to their political and religious rights—only to educate them well, in the common acceptation of the term, and all will be safe. Now this is a radical mistake. It is vainly undertaking to erect and support a magnificent edifice without a solid foundation. All the light and knowledge in the universe would not make a nation secure and happy, without the deep and broad basis of moral and religious principle. I hazard nothing in saying that the Bible contains the only code of laws, or rather the elements of the only code, which can sustain our free government, or any other like it. All history and experience might confidently be adduced in support of this position. It is only by teaching the rising generation to "fear God and keep his commandments," that we can induce them to "obey magistrates,"—to "lead quiet and peaceable lives in all godliness and honesty," and thus to maintain the great pillars of the state. By warmly patronising Sabbath-schools; therefore, by visiting them often, and by aspiring to the honour of becoming teachers in these heaven-founded seminaries, you can do more to undergird the ship, and keep her on in the right course, than when you heave the lead, raise the quadrant, or stand at the helm.

But I must draw to a close; the time which I had a right to detain you, is more than elapsed. And now, ye favoured managers of this great and blessed Union! ye parents, teachers, ministers, churches, friends of revivals, patriots, rulers and judges of the land—under the smiles of heaven, the success of this cause depends upon your prayers and your efforts. You are all deeply, and may not I add, equally interested in its success. By helping it forward, you advance the interest of "pure and undefiled religion"—you promote the happiness and true glory of the nation—you honour God, and bless the world.

Go on then, I beseech you, from duty to duty—from mountain to mountain—from river to river. Be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might. Never rest till the noble work is done—till a Sabbath-school is established wherever there are children to enjoy its blessings. Never rest till you hear the shout of "Hosanna to the son of David," from all the Atlantic coast—from the shores of the Lakes and the tops of the Alleghanies, and then from *the multitudes on multitudes, in the great valley of decision!*

We have thus presented our readers with the substance of this interesting and valuable exposition of the principles and capabilities of Sunday Schools. The general opinions advanced by our author will not be controverted. They have

their foundation in good sense—in just views of human character—in elevated conceptions of our national destiny—in enlarged Christian benevolence, and in the unchangeable principles of divine government.

That opposition will be entirely overcome, and the good will of all conciliated, is hardly to be expected. Some there are, who will long remain ignorant or misinformed. Prejudices are almost as stubborn as facts, and, indeed, they must yield, before facts have any advantage at all: and thus to the end of time, there will be those, who, on the first approach of truth, may claim the right to adopt the language of the fallen one, as

“ His grieved look he fixed sad
Sometimes towards Heaven and the full blazing sun,
Which now sat high in his meridian tower.

—————To thee I call,
But with no friendly voice; and add thy name,
O Sun! to tell thee how I hate thy beams.”

But we are persuaded, that to those who are free from all embarrassments of this nature, and whose minds are prepared to receive the truth in the love of it, the preacher will not have laboured in vain to prove, that it is by the diffusion of such an influence as well-regulated and well-taught Sunday Schools spread over our land, that our country is to be saved and blessed.

ART. II.—THE CHILDREN'S WEEK, by the author of the “*Morals of Pleasure*,” and the “*Young Emigrants*.” Boston, Carter and Hendee; Baltimore, Charles Carter.—1830.—pp. 136.

THERE is much in a name. We need to understand the tastes and humours of children, in order to attract or please them; and we seldom realize how much of their pleasure depends on trifles in which taste and humour are principally concerned. The very phrase “CHILDREN'S WEEK,” is agreeable and harmonious, and starts into being a thousand pleasant associations.

It was its name which first attracted our attention to the little volume before us; but as soon as we found that it was written by the author of the “*Morals of Pleasure*,” we were prepared for many erroneous views, and sad deficiencies, as well as for much that was sensible, chaste, and proper. The errors and deficiencies of “*The Morals of Pleasure*” were exposed in our Number for May, 1830; and with the most kind and respectful feelings towards the author, (who, we suppose, is a lady,) we proceed to the same duty respecting “*The Children's Week*.”

We do not condemn it because it has no religious character.

This is, indeed, a serious objection to any book for children—so important is it that religious truth should be inculcated, and religious principle implanted and strengthened in our earliest years, that we should esteem any child's book radically defective that did not, in some form, present a distinct view of religious truth. Why is it that the most interesting and attractive of all subjects of human contemplation, is regarded with so much distrust by some of the writers of children's books? Surely, not because it is, in itself, an uninteresting and unattractive subject to them. Let the character and life of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, be presented to a child's unprejudiced mind, just as they are delineated in the Gospel, and, we doubt not, it would excite a deeper interest in the child than any other life or character that history can present. Associated with a wearisome hour of confinement, remembered as an unnecessary task of the memory; caricatured and distorted, to give point or force to anecdotes and witty sayings; and abused by misquotations and misapplications, in every form, it is not surprising that the Scriptures, or the religion they inculcate, should have little attraction for children. Indeed, we suppose it impossible to find a mind on earth that is unprejudiced against the Bible. All this, however, is neither an excuse nor an apology for letting religion alone in children's books; it is only a fact, which needs to be known and well regarded by those who would overcome the prejudices, and correct the errors which prevail.

THE CHILDREN'S WEEK commences with a most unhappy figure of speech, whether we regard the language or the thought. We can easily conceive, that a Christian father, who would, unwittingly, place the volume in his child's hand, would find himself in a most unpleasant dilemma, if called upon to explain the first half dozen lines:—

The actors are at hand, and by their show
You shall know all that you are like to know.—*Shakspeare.*

But we must crave your patience, young friends, for a few moments. We cannot permit our 'troupe' to rush upon the stage without the proper scenic decorations, and, in the adjustment of these, your fancy must co-operate with ours, or the labour will be lost.

It seems that mythology has charms for children which Christianity cannot boast; that falsehood wins their attention when truth has no attractions; that a system of pagan absurdity is not an unsafe or unsuitable study, while the religion which is to emancipate the world from the bondage of sin, and to guide and support it in the way to life everlasting, is to be withheld entirely from view, or to be presented only in some equivocal and indefinite form.

'What are you thinking of, Sarah?' asked her mother.

'I was thinking of the stars,' replied she—'that they seemed just as if they were looking down upon us, and I could almost believe that they know what we are doing. Did you ever have such a thought, mother?'

'Yes, my dear, often. It is an idea, too, for which there is higher authority than mine. Shakspeare, I think, calls them "eyes of light." Imagination has always been busy with them, working them into fables and forms, till every star can tell a tale. For instance, we cannot look up at the cluster now just above us, the Corona Borealis, but the story of Theseus' valour and ingratitude, of Ariadne's love and wrongs, recurs to us.'

'And the despair of poor old Egeus, too,' said Mrs. Atkinson—'I, at least, never forget him.'

We will ask the reader to examine the following passage, with a view to judge of its influence, moral and intellectual, on the mind of an inquisitive, reflecting child:—

'Direct your eye at about an equal height with it above the horizon, till you arrive exactly in the east—a little further—there—try to follow my finger—now you have it, I'm sure—four stars, forming a diamond.'—

'O yes—and another a little way off.'

'Exactly right. They are in the Dolphin. The poets have many fables about this constellation. Some say, that Arion, a famous musician of Lesbos, was thrown overboard by sailors, who wished to possess themselves of his wealth. But his music having previously attracted a number of dolphins around the ship, they pressed forward, emulous of saving his life, and presented their little crooked backs, for all the world like so many saddles, upon which he could ride the waves in safety. Arion was very glad of the offer, as you may suppose, more so than if the Prince of Cobourg's fifty horses had been at his service; and, instantly mounting the foremost, was conveyed to a place of safety,—the rest attending to furnish relays if necessary. It is added, however, that the poor dolphin, having stranded himself, could not re-imbark; and that Arion ungratefully permitted him to perish on the shore; upon which the gods, more just than man, placed him among the stars.'

'That's good! cried Hugh,—whose sympathy with the inferior orders of creation, made him almost receive fable for fact,—'that's good!'

'Direct your eye, then, northwest from the Dolphin, till it meets a very large star, surrounded by several smaller ones—have you found it?'

'Yes.'

'That is in Lyra; and this you must know is said to be the very lyre with which Orpheus so softened the infernal deities, that they gave him back his wife again.'

Passing by the use of the word sanctuary to denote a corner of the piazza where choice plants stood, (p. 25,) the enumeration of personal accomplishments, (p. 33,) the motto to Chap. IV. (p. 49,) the allusion to good little saints to preside over the six days of the week, (p. 53,) and a gross grammatical error, (p. 54,) we rest a moment at a parental decree, "a domestic Saturnalia," recorded on page 59. To say nothing of the bad English, which is too obvious to need pointing out, we cannot help wondering what a child would think or say, who should resort to some proper book for an explanation of this (to him) strange word, Saturnalia. He would find they were feasts ce-

celebrated among the Romans, in honour of the god Saturn; and that, during their continuance, every thing ran into debauchery and dissoluteness, and nothing was heard or seen in the streets of Rome, but the din, riot and disorder of a people utterly abandoned to sensual pleasure. If the author had said that *Mr. and Mrs. Philips* decreed that it should be a week of domestic Saturnalia, the English of the sentence would be well enough, perhaps; at any rate, it would be better than it is now; but how the thought or allusion can be made right, we cannot conceive. "Domestic Saturnalia!" What a monstrous association of ideas!

From page 68 to 74, we have a masquerading scene, the influence of which is hardly compensated by rather a meagre moral at its close.

'Hush—hush,' said Sarah—'The hall door opens—and softly too, as if some one entered slyly. Do look Matty—that must be Jasper.'

Matty, followed by Hugh, peeped into the hall, but immediately retreated with marks of surprise and confusion.

'Mother, mother,' said the former, 'there's a gentleman and lady in the entry—'

'The queerest looking creatures, too,' said Hugh, 'that ever I saw!'

Mrs. Philips was about to ring for a servant to attend the visitors, when the parlour door opened, and two persons, corresponding to the description given by Matty and Hugh, entered. They were dressed in the style of '76; the gentleman in a suit of purple velvet, with an embroidered white satin vest; his hair frizzled and powdered, and confined behind in a black silk bag; brilliant buckles in his shoes, and a sword by his side: the lady in a rich brocade; a lilac ground overspread with flowers as large as life, and of every hue. From the sleeve, which terminated a little below the elbow, hung immense ruffles; and the bottom was festooned so as to display a yellow quilted silk petticoat. Her hair was dressed over a cushion, and on the top of this was placed a fantastical lace cap—but to the amusement of some, and the astonishment of others, both the lady and her attendant wore black masks!

A hum of whispers circulated through the room.

'Why, 'tis Jasper to be sure,' said Helen to Sarah.

'Yes, but who can the other be?' replied Sarah. The maskers having made their mute salutation to the elder members of the family, now directed their course to the girls; Hugh and Matty following them—at first with a respectful observance, then a half-suppressed titter, till at length, his mirth getting the better of his good manners, Hugh laughed outright. Upon this the mute gentleman, turning towards him with a menacing air, touched his sword, as if on the point of chastising his impertinence.

Hugh, though instinctively shrinking at the hint of cold steel, speedily recovered, provoked by it to even a more unceremonious approach to the mysterious visitor.

'Just as if I didn't know you, Jasper!' cried he, at the same time catching hold of the skirt of his coat.

'Begone!' exclaimed the mask, throwing himself into a theatrical attitude, 'I'll make a ghost of him that stops me.'

Whether the tones of the voice, evidently artificial, were alarming, or that the language was portentous, we cannot say; but certain it is, Hugh fell ra-

ther more into the rear—at the same time guarding against any constructions unfavourable to his courage.

‘You need’nt think I’m afraid of you, sir, for all that,’ said he. ‘I know,’ said he to Matty, who was a little doubtful, ‘I know it is Jasper—only he looks so big with those clothes on. I wish Warder was here; *he’d* find him out quick enough.’

Jenny had by this time discovered that something remarkable was going on in the parlour. Under pretence of snuffing the candles, she had taken a view of the strangers, and then leaving the room with her head over her shoulder, had reported her observations to Dinah, who forthwith stationed herself near the parlour door.

‘I s’pose it’s master Jasper,’ said she to Matty, who asked her opinion, ‘for he made me get him a pair of master’s silk stockings to-day, unbeknown to misses—but as to that woman with him, she looks just as if she had come down out of the picter up stairs.’

The unknown gentleman, released from the troublesome interference of Hugh, now approached Helen and Sarah, and bowed profoundly.

‘Permit me the honour,’ said he, ‘of introducing Miss Biddy Bloom, who, though a revolutionary heroine, as you may guess by her appearance, is still a great admirer of the young. Miss Biddy, Miss Lee—Miss Philips, Miss Biddy.’

During this ceremony, conducted with much parade of tone and gesture, the fair unknown curtesied, fanned herself furiously, but did not speak.

‘Pray, did Miss Biddy lose her tongue in the revolution?’ asked Helen, laughing.

‘No, indeed,’ replied the mask,—‘I am assured that it wagged throughout the whole seven years with the greatest effect; and has, more than once, unaided, silenced a battery; but her profound respect for you, exceeds even her loquacity. Be encouraged, Miss Biddy,’ he continued, in a tender tone, ‘believe me, you have nothing to fear from either of these ladies. They are no prodigies—’

Here Helen and Sarah were much disposed to retort upon the saucy speaker, but their wit was cowed by the presence of the unknown mask.

‘This,’ continued the gentleman, ‘is Mr. Richard Lee; just perched at college—a contributor to a collegiate newspaper—writes verses, and guesses enigmas—is what is called a “promising youth”—Mr. Lee, Miss Biddy.’

Richard bowed, and Miss Biddy, still speechless, extended her hand—then, as if abashed at her own advance, withdrew it, and curtesied.

Matty and Hugh were endeavouring meanwhile to sift their grandmamma, who of course was supposed to be at the bottom of the mystery; but she protested so seriously her ignorance, that they could not doubt it.

The gentleman now approached Mrs. Philips, and taking out his snuff-box, after tapping it lightly, offered it to her with the air of an ancient beau.

‘There Jasper!’ cried his mother, ‘your box would betray you if we had doubted before—now have done with your foolery, and tell us who it is you have brought here.’

‘O curiosity! thy name is woman,’ cried Jasper, removing his mask, and resuming his natural voice—‘even my respectable mother cannot resist thee. But,’ said he gravely, and with an air of entreaty, ‘will you promise me, if I inform you, that you will forgive me?’

‘Forgive you! nonsense—there’s nothing to forgive.’

‘Indeed—indeed you must give me your word—there is more in this than you think.’

Mrs. Philips, struck with the tone in which this was uttered, and naturally apprehensive, became uneasy. The idea immediately presented itself, that Jasper having done something wrong, was taking this way to evade her displeasure.

‘Jasper,’ said she, ‘don’t trifle with me—tell me at once what this means’—

‘Well,’ said he, with a look not intended to allay her anxiety, ‘well, if I must—I must;’ and leading the lady up to his mother, whose countenance exhibited an odd contrast to the absurd figures before her, he, at the same moment, removed the mask, and revealed Frederick Hammond!

This unexpected disclosure produced a burst of pleasure. Mr. Philips, advancing to Frederick, gave him a hearty welcome; and Mrs. Philips, while she rebuked Jasper’s roguery, acknowledged that she was much more than compensated for any fears he had mischievously inspired.

Inquiries now poured forth from all sides.

‘Where did you get your fine clothes, Jasper?’ said Matty.

‘Your bag, too?’ said Helen.

‘And your sword, Jasper?’ said Hugh—‘I should like to know where you got that.’

‘Mrs. Hammond furnished us with every thing,’ replied he. ‘You know she has a quantity of old-fashioned gear that belonged to her father and mother—but oh, the sport we had in dressing! It almost killed me.’

‘What put it in your heads to disguise yourselves?’ asked Sarah, aside to Jasper.

‘Oh, just to break up the stiffness of the business,’ said he. ‘You may suppose Frederick felt a little queer, as well as myself, and we thought the best way was to work it into a joke.’

Frederick and Jasper had now to undergo a thorough examination. They were turned about and about; and Mrs. Atkinson, as much amused as the young folks, lived over again the splendid times of her youth, calling up the long forgotten images of padusos, ducapes, negligees, hoops, &c. &c.—till Frederick begged to retire a moment, that he might disrobe. Having rejoined the circle in his proper shape, disencumbered in mind as well as body, he was able to parry the jokes which assailed Miss Biddy from all quarters; and to contribute his share to the merriment of the evening.

What can more certainly insure happiness than the conquest over angry feelings—the sacrifice of pride—the reconciliation of friends—the approbation of those we love! If the spirits of our young readers ever want a cordial, let them try some portion of this prescription.

Why our author introduces crowns and *sous* into the currency of her book, (p. 78,) and how Hugh’s dog, Warder, was learned to keep his place so intelligently, (p. 82,) we cannot determine; but it is evident that she is resolved that her readers shall know something of the stage, and players, and dramatists, and she closes chapter eighth with an extract from one of the most objectionable of dramatic writings.

In chapter eighth, our author’s young readers are made familiar with the lottery system. We do not mean that what we call lotteries are approved or discussed, but that a subject is so introduced and treated, as to make children familiar with the language of gamblers, and with the infatuating attractions of games of chance. “Game,” “lottery,” “luck,” “prize,” “gambler,” “stake,” “lost,” “won,” &c. &c., are words of frequent occurrence. They are all the necessary language of the amusement itself, and will not come awkwardly from the lips, when he, who is now a playful and happy child, shall become a callous, haggard, desperate gamester. Who does not

know that the half-serious admonition at the close of the amusement, would be lost with the first dream of the night, while the excitement and reverses of feeling, which the game produced, will never be entirely forgotten.

The readers of the *Children's Week* are next introduced to the world of fairies; but we are sure it cannot be one of its inviting provinces, though the author makes the children spend the last day of the week in it.

The general character of the thoughts and pursuits of Sunday may well be imagined from the history of the week's employment. It seems an arrangement was made for a surgical operation to be performed, after the afternoon service, upon the eyes of an interesting young man, in the neighbourhood, and the children were to be present. The scene is described with considerable particularity—the aid of fairies is again called in—a curious philosophical discussion takes place—a marvellous, but genuine love-scene ensues—and the holy day is closed by a review of the week's amusements.

We had noticed several objectionable passages, upon which it is unnecessary to remark, inasmuch as the general character of the book is so obviously and radically defective.

ART. III.—MEMOIR OF HUGH GASTON BOYD.

“Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning.”—*Ps.* xxx. 5.

THE subject of the following memoir was born near Chesterville, Chester District, South Carolina, on the 30th of July, 1810. He was the oldest of six children. His parents, David and Mary Boyd, are persons of much respectability, and worthy members of one of the Churches in that place.

His father is a planter, and thinking he could pursue his occupation to greater advantage in Alabama, he, together with his son, and the rest of the family, removed to that state in December, 1819, and settled in Shell-Creek settlement, Wilcox county.

Hugh Gaston was a child of an uncommonly amiable disposition, and manifested a strong desire for instruction, especially in religious subjects, from early childhood. He was a Sunday School scholar of more than ordinary proficiency. Among many other portions of God's word, he committed to memory the 119th Psalm, and the whole of Christ's sermon on the mount. He was quite economical of the little sums of money which he obtained by industry, in hours given him for leisure. This money, as his parents inferred from remarks occasionally made, he was laying up until he should obtain a sufficiency to pay the expense of gaining an education. It is

believed by them, that he intended to have devoted himself to the gospel ministry, as his mind was somewhat exercised upon that subject, especially about the time he made a public profession of religion.

When quite a child, he discovered a serious and thoughtful turn of mind. The fear of God seemed constantly before his mind, and eternity, with its awful realities, lay with an abiding weight upon his heart. These buds of promise, his pious mother, to whom he was a most affectionate and dutiful son, endeavoured to cherish and unfold, with maternal care and solicitude. She would often take him with her in private, and pray for him, and instruct him in the way of salvation. He imitated her example, (so worthy of imitation,) for when he was not more than twelve or thirteen years of age, he would take his little sisters to the silent grove, and pray with them.

When about fourteen years of age, he became much alarmed about the state of his soul, and was under conviction of sin for more than three months; at the expiration of which time, his fears gradually subsided, and he had a comfortable hope that his sins were forgiven, and his peace made with heaven. So deep and pungent were his convictions of sin, that during the time he was under them, he was, for the most part, unable to attend to work. He realized, in a great degree, the feelings of Paul, when burdened with sin, he exclaimed "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death." Soon after he obtained relief, he expressed a wish to unite himself with the people of God, and having related the exercises of his mind, he was received into the fellowship of the Church. Henceforth his life corresponded with his profession. He was very conscientious in the performance of prayer. He conducted family worship in the absence of his parents; and it is believed that he seldom, if ever laid down at night, or arose in the morning, without praying to God. He was uncommonly careful not to bring a wound upon the blessed cause he had espoused. Never, even by his most intimate friends, was he known to utter a rash or profane word. Our Saviour said of his disciples, "by their fruit shall ye know them." Judging by this standard, surely Hugh Gaston Boyd was a genuine follower of the Lord Jesus. Yet, nevertheless, he was often bowed down with sorrow and heaviness of heart, fearing that his heart was not thoroughly renewed, and sometimes that the spirit of God had forsaken him for ever. Often was he mourning over his coldness in the service of his master, and his want of love to God, and of faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. He read much in the Bible, and in other religious books, especially of that kind which treated of the Lord's Supper, of which he

feared he might be an unworthy partaker. These spiritual conflicts, however, did not drive him to despair. He persevered in praying that God would reveal to him the light of his reconciled countenance, and bestow upon him the joys of his salvation. The silent grove often witnessed his cries and tears for relief. But still he was fearful that his prayers resulted from a slavish fear, and not from holy love to God; for, said he, "perfect love casteth out fear," as the Scripture teaches us. While in this disconsolate situation, he had frequent forebodings of mind, that he had but a short time to live.

For nearly two years previous to his death, it pleased the Lord to suffer Satan to buffet him, in a peculiar manner. One night, two or three months previous to his death, as he lay upon his bed, the idea came into his mind, that if he went to sleep, he would not awake until he awoke in hell, which filled his mind with such deep distress, that he arose, came down stairs, and walked through the house; and so intense were the agonies of his spirit, that he rolled upon the floor, uttering the most heart-rending lamentations. His mother awakened as he was repeating the lines,

"Here, Lord, I give myself away,
'Tis all that I can do."

He also repeated the 296th Hymn of Rippon's Collection, beginning

"Help and salvation, Lord, I crave,
For both I greatly need."

She called to him, and asked what was the matter. He replied that he was unable to describe his feelings, they were so awful. She then arose, and endeavoured to comfort him. She took the Bible, and read to him many of its promises, and urged him to lay hold on them; as "Why art thou cast down, O my soul? and why art thou disquieted within me? hope thou in God, for I shall praise him, who is the health of my countenance, and my God." "Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted." She told him to pray to God to dispel his doubts and fears, and to enable him to trust in his promises. He replied, that he had never neglected that duty, but that it often seemed more like mocking than prayer, and he thought that God would not hear such petitions. His mother again said, "Blessed are they that do hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled." "Do you not thus hunger and thirst?" "O yes," he replied, "I would give all the world, did I possess it, to feel assured that my sins were pardoned, and that I had an interest in the Redeemer."

He was often at other times conversing with his mother, and making known his trials and conflicts. She would some-

times reply, "I know, my son, you suffer much, but I should rejoice to see all my children like you." "O mother! do not say so: if you knew my feelings, how could you wish any one to have them?" "Because," she said, "I think they would be on their way to heaven, where I want all my children to meet."

On the 14th of August, 1830, he was violently seized with a bilious fever, which confined him to his bed to the time of his death. He bore his bodily sufferings with great patience, and was never heard to murmur or complain.

From the beginning of his illness he did not expect to recover. A few days after he was attacked, the agony of his soul came upon him with redoubled violence; and so great was his distress, that he requested some of his pious relatives and friends might be sent for, to pray for him. They came, and prayers were offered up in the name of him who said "Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted," and conversation was held with him, in which his friends endeavoured to calm his fears, by laying before him the promises of the gospel. On the evening of the same day, as his grandmother Gaston was leaving him, he bade her farewell, and requested her to ask his dear grandfather to pray for him that night; for he felt that unless the prayers of the righteous availed something with God, he was lost and undone for ever. During his sickness he was often heard to say, "O! that I could obtain joy in believing; how happy I should be." Being asked, if he could obtain that joy, would he be willing to leave this world of sin and trouble. "Yes," he replied, "could I but feel that I had an interest in the Redeemer." The night previous to his departure, about ten o'clock, being asked by his mother, if he had no evidence of his acceptance with God, and of an interest in the Saviour, he replied, "I cannot say that I have." She requested him, if he had, to let her know, to relieve her mind. "Mother, I cannot say that I have; and to tell you a lie, I would not for the world." "But," said he, (as he was frequently saying), if the whole world were mine, I would give it to know that my sins were pardoned." Near 12 o'clock, the same night, the physician having no expectation of his recovery, his friends thought it advisable to let him know it. Being asked if he felt sensible that death was near, he said that he did not know it was. Upon being assured, by his physician, that he was near dying, "Ah!" said he, "I thought I might have lived two or three days longer." Then all the energies of his soul became aroused, and he prayed fervently for himself, and requested all around him to pray also. His grandfather Gaston observed that they had been praying for him; "Pray," said he, "from your very hearts; for the Lord knoweth your hearts." The room was immediately filled with fer-

vent petitions on his account. He was also constantly praying himself: "O Lord, break down the separating wall that bars me from thy love." His mother said that she hoped he had broken it down, and that he would soon feel it. His grandfather again urged him to believe in the promises, and trust in the Lord Jesus Christ; for he was a willing and an able Saviour, and any that came to him, he would, in no wise, cast out. He replied, "I know that he is a willing and an able Saviour, and I have tried to serve him with my whole heart. After many prayers and much conversation with him, his friends were anxiously waiting to see what the Lord would do for his soul. He was still for a little while, and then said "verily of a truth, and with sincerity of heart, I give myself away to the Lord." The Lord was pleased, in great compassion, to dispel his doubts, and light broke in upon his darkened soul. He appeared to have received new strength, and exclaimed, "Jesus, Jesus, sweet Jesus! I feel thee precious to my soul!" His mother said, "How do you feel now? Do you feel as if your sins were pardoned?" Looking up, he replied, "yes, ma'am, I think I do." Then clasping his hands together, he said, "O yes! I do feel that Christ is precious to my soul, and that my sins are pardoned for the Redeemer's sake." His mother again said, "I suppose you can now say with old Simeon, 'now lettest thy servant depart in peace, for mine eyes have seen thy salvation.'" "O yes! bless the Lord, O my soul! and all that is within me bless his holy name." How changed the scene when his soul was set at liberty! It was truly affecting. Mingled tears of joy and sorrow flowed from the eyes of all present. So great was the excitement, and so loud the expressions of grief and gratitude, that it was with difficulty he could be heard. He requested that good attention might be paid to what he was saying. He then went on with a most pungent and forcible exhortation for near an hour. He urged upon all in the house the importance of seeking religion, in order to get to heaven. He told them how prone men were to neglect it, far more so than any of their other concerns. "How often," said he, "is it the case, when men assemble at the house of God, that their chief conversation is about their cotton crops, and the things of this world, to the neglect of their immortal souls." He requested all present to pray for him, especially his oldest sister, whom he took by the hand, and exhorted never to neglect that duty. His oldest brother then took him by the hand, and said, "farewell, brother." He replied, "O William! William, I warn you, with my dying breath, to make religion your first and chief concern. You will now be overseer in my stead. Teach the servants, set a good example before them, and always reprove

them when you see them doing wrong." He exhorted both his brothers to be very careful what sort of company they kept; never to associate with the wicked, and to make religion their chief concern. He said to his mother, "you know that the Scriptures say, Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it." He called the physician to him, and taking his hand, said, "I hope you will be convicted of sin, and that it will end in a thorough conversion to God. Do not be offended with me, for I speak for your good." Being asked, to whom he was talking, he said, "to my Doctor." He called the servants to him, and conversed with them individually. To the one who waited upon him in the morning, he said, "You acted as servant to me this morning, henceforth I want you to serve God, and try to get to heaven." He called one of his grandfather's servants to him, who had been for some time under conviction of sin, and with whom he had frequently conversed upon the subject of religion, and said, "Simon, I think you told me you had a hope." "Yes, I did." "Do you still think so? Tell me the truth, for God knows your heart." "I think I have, sir." He then added, "Do not be ashamed to own your Lord and Master, the first opportunity you have, by making an open profession of religion, and commemorating his dying love." When he had nearly ceased talking through exhaustion, he looked up, and saw all weeping around him, and said "what are you all crying for? Jesus can make a dying bed feel soft as downy pillows are." His mother said that she felt glad, although she did cry. From this time he appeared, for the most part, composed, with both his hands clasped, and raised towards heaven, as if in the exercise of prayer, and at times parts of his petitions were audible. He continued to grow weaker and weaker, until near five o'clock next evening, (Aug. 28,) when he died, and, as we trust, his disenthralled spirit, left this vale of tears for a mansion of unceasing glory in the heavens. How forcibly were the sentiments contained in the following lines, felt by those present,

—————"The chamber where the good man meets his fate
Is privileged beyond the common walks of virtuous life;
Quite in the verge of heaven."—————

He had accumulated a small sum of money, by his industry, in hours granted him for leisure. A short time before his death, he requested that two dollars and a half of it might be given to a certain person, whom he named, and a part of the remainder to some benevolent object, which would promote the glory of God.

One remark, we think, may here be made with the greatest

propriety. There is much encouragement to go to God in times of need; for several Christians had agreed to make his case a special subject of prayer, and the Lord was graciously pleased to hear and answer them.

We conclude this brief memoir with the words which he was frequently uttering, after God had bestowed upon him the joys of his salvation. "Glory, honour, praise, and power, be to God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Amen and amen."

ART. IV.—THOUGHTS ON THE DUTIES GROWING OUT OF THE FAMILY RELATION.

THE duty of providing for the wants of the family, by the husband and father, is obvious. "The husband is bound to provide his wife with necessaries suitable to her situation and his condition in life." If the husband abandon his wife, or they separate by consent, without any provision for her maintenance, or if he sends her away, he is liable for her necessaries, and he sends credit with her to that extent. The duties of the wife, while cohabiting with her husband, form the consideration of his liability. He is, accordingly, bound to provide for her in his family, and while he is not guilty of any cruelty, and is willing to provide for her a home, and all reasonable necessaries there, he is not bound to furnish them elsewhere.*

It may be worth while to remark, that as there are duties in this, as in all other relations, which no law can prescribe, so there are unnumbered ways in which happiness may be promoted by a kind spirit. The law of the land, and the law of God, in its letter, may be met, by supplying only the *necessaries* of life; but he has not reached the spirit of those laws, or known any thing of the true nature of affection, who attempts thus to measure his duties. In seasons of sorrow, suffering, and anxiety, this spirit of kindness will make a husband's sympathy and attention peculiarly grateful, and he thus becomes, to his wife, like the shadow of a great rock in a weary land. Such a husband explores and opens every source of comfort, that from them rills of pleasure may flow into the common dwelling. Such is the spirit which religion enjoins, and these are the habitations in which the laws of conjugal love are illustrated and commended.

The marriage relation is eminently adapted to promote the great interests of the immortal spirit. It involves the high duty—a duty encompassing and involving all that has been presented before—of endeavoring to aid each other in the perilous journey to immortal joys. The Apostle, in addressing those

* Kent's Comment. on the American Law.—II. p. 123, 124.

sustaining this relation, charges them to live together as heirs of the grace of life. That a reference to eternity should constitute an important part of their united plans, it seems almost a waste of effort to attempt to prove. It is impossible not to be struck with the narrowness of view of those who regard this union as designed merely for the promotion of earthly happiness. Were the present the whole of existence, such narrow views might have some apology; but beyond the enjoyments sought in this life, there is an immeasurable duration; and the union formed here may be prolonged in eternal joys, or in unchanging, and unspeakable sorrows. The longest united life on the earth can be but a moment, a fleeting shadow, compared with the slow-moving, unending ages of eternity, that await the united spirits. How contracted seems the view which gives to the whole of these joys and anticipations their centre and circumference on the earth! How much more exalted are the conceptions of this relation, and of the interests it involves, when we extend our thoughts of their influence and consequences, into eternity; when earthly sorrows and joys shall begin and never cease to tell in endless ages beyond the grave!

And can any one doubt that such considerations in reference to this union are proper? Will it be questioned, that it falls in with all that is tender and grand, in our views of it, thus to make it bear on eternity? Which, of all the earthly connexions, so fitly grasps the coming world, and so imperiously prompts to a preparation to meet each other at the bar of God? However sacred and tender this earthly alliance, it is to be dissolved—perhaps to-day! How strongly are we prompted, then, to inquire, whether there may not be a re-union of kindred spirits! How naturally do we ask, whether there may not be a world, where, though the personal intimacy of the earth may be denied, there may be the consciousness that the beloved companion of our pilgrimage is happy! Doomed to pass through much, and perhaps severe, mutual suffering, how natural to ask, whether there may not be unmingled, united joy? Pressed down by a common sinful nature, exposed to the same spiritual foes, and needing the sprinkling of the same atoning blood, and the guidance and sanctification of the same gracious spirit, how fit to desire the embrace of the same paternal arms, and repose on the same paternal bosom! With the prospect, also, of a certain separation, just at hand, indicated by the dim eye, and fallen lip, and the big drops wrung out by nature's expiring agony; or in the hour, when the once animated, cheerful, affectionate, intelligent companion is committed to the chill sepulchre, how consoling the reflection, under such circumstances, that the spirit has gone to rest, and reigns in glory! How

soothing the thought, in this day of bitter anguish, that the endearments of the fire-side were made preparatory to the celestial glories; and that neither the smiles of the first years of the union, nor the ripened affections of maturer life, made us forget that these smiles might soon be exchanged for tears and groans, and that the object of this affection might, at any moment, start from our embrace, and ascend to the bosom of an eternal Friend! How narrow are those views of the legitimate influence of this relation, when they have no reference to eternity! How low is that estimation of its influence and object, which never leads us to direct one prayer to the God of all our mercies, that He would fit our spirits for a united participation of the glories of a better world.

At the same time that these are commended, as among the highest duties of the married life, it is obvious to remark, that the union is eminently fitted to prepare the spirits for the destinies of eternity. Never do we need more a bosom open to receive, in tender sympathy, our sorrows and our joys, than when the work of religion is commencing in the soul. There are so many feelings that we would not proclaim to all men; so many emotions that can be justly appreciated only by those who know the whole texture and form of our spirits; so many sudden and unanticipated varieties in our religious sorrows and joys, that there is peculiarly needed the aid of one always near, and always the kind and sympathizing counsellor. Religion is, truly, a social work. Though its direct concerns are between the spirit and its God, yet that spirit is helped in its sorrows, and quickened in its joys, by the tender counsel of others. Here no aid is so ready, so kind, so appropriate, as that which can be rendered in the relation of husband and wife. No one else so intimately knows the wants of the spirit. No one else can so faithfully and tenderly apply the instructions and comforts of the Gospel. No one else can plead so sincerely and fervently, with the God of all mercies, that He would guide, comfort, and strengthen in the conflict, and bring the contending spirit of our dearest earthly friend off more than conqueror.

Especially is this the case in the time of affliction. Here sympathy and condolence are indispensable. Here may be shown most tenderly, the power of conjugal affection, and here, most kindly, may be breathed forth the promises and comforts of religion. How cold and cheerless is even the sympathy of a husband, when he approaches the bed-side of an afflicted wife, and he breathes nothing but this world's poor consolation! How does the voice of condolence die upon the ear, when it does not reach the deep sorrows of the soul, and

teach the afflicted spirit to kindle with the hope of bliss, when the sorrows of earth shall have an end! What avails kindness of feeling to the fainting spirit, when the tongue cannot express that kindness in religious strains? what avails it in the day of sorrow to tell of past joys, when the lips must be silent in reference to the future? what comfort, in that dark hour, can be poured into the bosom by telling of past pleasures, or accomplishments, or the possession of wealth, or even the deep feeling of love? The soul needs some more heavenly converse. These themes are proper and agreeable in health, nor do we undervalue them; but they die away in the sound, and the objects they present become dim in vision, whenever a husband comes to the bed-side of a suffering companion, if his lips are sealed in all *but* these. The suffering spirit *must* feel then, that there is an eternity, fearful or joyful, just at hand; it *must* feel, that a husband's voice should be the first to direct to future joys, and that a husband's piety should be first to paint on this cloud of sorrows, the bow of hope.

And how weak and unavailing is even the tenderness of a beloved wife, when she comes in the *form* of an angel of mercy, but with none of the credentials of a messenger of pardon and mercy. Her own soul is dark. It is full, and it offers no consolation; no ground of hope. Both she and the suffering companion of her bosom, are without an anchor in the skies. They are doomed to bear their afflictions *ALONE*. No Saviour is near to sustain them; and neither of their unpardoned spirits dares look into the open grave, or think of the scenes beyond it. Say, have you never witnessed such scenes, and felt that the great purpose of the marriage relation has failed, and been forgotten? Need the parties to it to be united *only* in suffering, and not in hope; need they live and die strangers to the tenderest joys that the human heart can know? Are we wrong in believing that this union is peculiarly auspicious to the cultivation of religious feeling; and that a benignant God has hallowed it with his benediction, and designed it as the means of preparing us for eternal, united bliss and glory? If you have lived long, and have never seriously thought of this design; if you have passed through united suffering, and have never looked up to a common Friend, and a common source of consolation; if you have walked, hand in hand, over the grave, and trampled, with united sacrilegious footsteps, on the blood of the Son of God—have you not perverted the design of the marriage relation, and forgotten the great purposes of your existence? and ought you to expect to be united, hereafter, in glory, endless and inconceivable? Surely not: and, when shrinking beneath the sceptre of the king of terrors, you

cast the sinking eye, dim to earthly objects, but to the dark wonders of your coming existence, your eager apprehension, the quick and stern decisions of conscience, will all testify that you cannot. Your spirit will then feel, that your *eternal* relation was what should have entered most deeply into the marriage connexion; *that* forgotten, all is forgotten; and the remembrance of the common scenes of earthly tenderness will only add wormwood and gall to your bitter cup. Your conviction will be, that heaven is unitedly lost, and hell unitedly won.

Such are the high and sacred duties and interests which, we suppose, will, at the day of judgment, be found to have been connected with, and involved in, the marriage relation.

What we have to say in regard to the proper way of discharging these duties, might be all expressed by the general declaration that they must be discharged in the true spirit of religion. We know there may be much kindness and softness of temper, without religion; we know that it is possible to come up to all the requirements of the civil law without it; and even in scenes of considerable perplexity, to manifest a spirit of much calmness; and in provocation, to exhibit much forbearance; and in the midst of trial, to express no little sympathy; but we know, also, that what we have considered the highest duties of this relation, cannot be discharged but by a soul that has caught the temper of the Redeemer; and we believe, also, that inferior duties will be most faithfully met, and kindly performed, by those who approach nearest to the kind feelings of the inhabitants of the celestial world. In connecting the wants of time with eternity, lies the great secret of conjugal felicity. They will have the most impenetrable shield thrown around their virtue who regard the presence of an all-seeing Being; who feel that the narrowness of earthly actions is to expand into eternal results; that every look, and action, and word, on earth, will stretch abroad into ceaseless consequences, and witness for or against us in the sorrows or joys of everlasting ages.

The due cultivation of the temper must enter, more than all other things, into the promotion of domestic happiness. A kind, conciliating and respectful deportment; a sincere desire to promote enjoyment in all possible forms; patience, if provoked or disappointed; meekness, if injured or neglected; the absence of fretfulness and murmurs; and a submissive bearing with the peculiarities of disposition, coupled with the faculty of *adjusting* the temper to those peculiarities; in one word, the very spirit of the Lord Jesus, constitutes the only sure source of enjoyment in this relation. Exhibitions of temper, good or

bad, must be constant. Scarcely an hour passes in this relation, in which an unkind look, a petulant speech, a mere sullen silence, a proud and angry rebuke for a trivial offence, may bring into this union chills and frosts that shall congeal all the tender emotions, and render the domestic abode cheerless and revolting. A morose or sour humour; a harsh, and easily irritated temper, are, either of them, a source of ceaseless wretchedness; and the indulgence of such feelings constitutes most of the misery which is known in the marriage relation.

It is not necessary to waste words here in a useless argument to prove that true religion wonderfully subdues these feelings, and works a complete change in the habits of thought and modes of conduct. The whole history of the operation of true religious feeling on the human faculties and dispositions, goes, perhaps, to this more than to any other point, that it completely changes an unkind temper, and fills the soul with new emotions. It is like the voice of Deity, rising over the primitive chaos; and its effect is like that which followed the command of the Saviour—Peace; be still—and immediately there was a great calm. The very essence of religion is peace and kindness, and its spirit is charity and concord: nay, its influence goes farther than all this. It not only stills the tempest, and hushes the ocean, but gives additional softness to the zephyr, and new sweetness to the air of Eden. It kindles increased serenity in the smile of affection, and makes the voice of love more grateful to the ear. It is a perpetual fountain of contentment, in “the ills that flesh is heir to.” It brings down a portion of the peace of heaven, and diffuses it through all our earthly feelings, to make love more tender; to chasten passion; to elevate affection. It is what mythologists tell us of the music of Orpheus—a potent charm to calm the rage of the lion, and make the tiger to listen to “concord of sweet sounds.” The conjugal relation becomes, by its influence, like the music of the spheres, whose rich melody speaks, in every strain, of universal concord and love, and tells, in grateful notes, of the benignity of their maker, God.

Probably there is nowhere else demanded such profound study of character as in the marriage relation. For this study before the union itself is formed, there is often only a very imperfect opportunity. Passion has the place of reason: accordingly, it happens, not unfrequently, that all the strength of feelings nurtured with care in infancy and youth, are now brought together in most violent contradiction. Habits have been formed on both sides, not in themselves evil, perhaps, but which no power can fit each to the other. Peculiarities of disposition, and trains of thought are brought side by side, but never

amalgamated; modes of expression which have become familiar prove offensive; an unyielding selfishness, which has always been indulged till now, is asked to yield; and for the first time, perhaps, our happiness is to be found in making another happy. Herein consists the great secret of not disturbing the harmony of this union. It is in the early smoothing of these sharp angles of character; in studying the peculiarity of disposition; in sacrificing personal preferences in things unimportant. The early and impartial study of character, and the influence of the mild principles and precepts of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, will ensure a universal and constant harmony in this twice-blest relation.

Allied to the proper cultivation of the temper, as a means of promoting domestic happiness, is a disposition to forgive when provoked or injured. Patience and kindness are always enjoined in our intercourse with our fellow-beings, and especially are they essential in a relation so certainly affecting the happiness of those concerned. Probably one reason why forgiveness of injuries is so strongly inculcated, is because of its essential importance to the continuance and comfort of human intercourse. If needed elsewhere, how much more in the purest and tenderest of all associations! Even if in other relations they might not be required, yet, surely, at the domestic fireside, an unforgiving temper must be a curse. There, of all places of the earth, should be the very empire of peace, and the brightness of an unclouded sun. Though the earth should be filled with the gloom of an endless moral winter, where domestic relations are found should be "perpetual spring, and ever-blooming flowers." It is the place selected by a kind, heavenly Friend, and consecrated as the dwelling-place of the purest earthly joy; the relic of Paradise lost on earth; and the type of Paradise regained in heaven. There, of all other places, let the purity of the gospel reign, and the Author of the gospel be ever present.

We have reserved, purposely, to a future time, the consideration of the necessity of prayer to those who would discharge properly the duties of the marriage relation. Hereafter, we shall urge this duty, more fully, on those who are parents. We now urge it as the most effectual aid in meeting properly the obligations of husband and wife. The faithful discharge of this duty is, indeed, *supposed* in the directions which the Bible gives. Living together as heirs of the grace of life, "*that your prayers be not hindered*," is a duty and motive prescribed by apostolic authority.

As we deem the habit of united prayer, by the husband and wife, the best security for the faithful discharge of their mutual duties, we may be permitted to press it a little more close-

ly upon the reader's consideration. Were it only for the influence of united prayer on the temper, we should need no other argument to commend it to the head of a family. It would be easy to show, that there is nothing so eminently fitted to produce calmness and equanimity of feeling, as a daily united devotion of soul, and consecration of all our interests to the Former of our bodies, and the Father of our spirits. Nothing so represses and subdues evil passions; nothing so much prompts to mutual forbearance and forgiveness, as an appearance together, for social worship, before the God of mercy and forgiveness. How shall jealous and envious passions be suffered to gain dominion over us, or, at least, to retain it, when the favour of the God of peace and pardon is habitually invoked, and the united spirits are accustomed to bend before him, under a deep consciousness of common wants, infirmities and sins; when the throbbing bosoms pant for the presence of God, and for a heaven of peace, how shall the spirits of such companions in devotion become embittered and enraged? It cannot be. The most sovereign soother of angry feelings, the most infallible alleviator of provocation and irritability, is the humble supplication of God's blessing in the morning; the prevailing consciousness that His eye is on the soul during the day; and the expectation of again unitedly bending around the altar of the same God in the early watches of the night.

But the diffusion of this happy influence over the feelings is not the only benefit of united prayer. There are more pressing considerations urging us to this duty. It is demanded by more solemn obligations. You are candidates for eternity. You have common trials to meet. You are encompassed by common dangers. You are approaching a judgment bar, before which you must both stand—kindred apostates from God, and kindred sufferers for sin—day after day exposed to temptation; and certain that but one Being can defend you from your foes, and guide you in your painful journey to another world; that there is a kind Mediator and Advocate, who has endured the most painful privations, and the deepest sorrows on your account, and has even died that you might live, and risen again that you might be justified; and knowing, too, that beyond the trials that await you, and the anguish that you must endure, there is a place of eternal rest, how *can* you forego all the vast benefits offered you, and pursue your way, helpless and cheerless, to a place of woe? How *dare* you rise from your nightly slumbers, protected by Him who never slumbers nor sleeps, and not lift a voice of gratitude towards heaven! How dare you feast, with united pleasure, on the bounties of God's providence, and never lisp a sentiment of thankfulness in the

ear of your Great Benefactor! How dare you go forth to your work, and your labour until evening, and never ask that the God of mercy may attend you, and crown your toils with success, that you may rejoice together in his goodness! How can you look forward to the desolate hour when this union is to be dissolved, with the conviction that you must then remember—and that the remembrance will be as a dagger in your bosom—that for the sick and dying object of your affection, not *one* supplication has been breathed; not one united cry has ever reached Him that you might be prepared for this hour? Above all, how can you look forward to the judgment seat of Christ, with the melancholy conviction, that, united in all things else, you maintained a fearful union in utterly neglecting to call upon God, and in going to eternity with souls unsanctified and sins unforgiven.

We are urging the duty of mutual religion and prayer. We know not how we can more impressively appeal to our readers, than by directing their thoughts a little more distinctly to the Day of Judgment. Of the approach of that day, no man who believes the New Testament can doubt. It is fixed. It is near. It will be awful. The great day of His wrath will come, and who shall be able to stand! Of this scene, however, we have no description to present, but such as the Bible gives, and such as is familiar to every reader's mind. Probably there will not be much to affect us in its external splendors. The bursting of the graves; the convulsions of the expiring earth; the flame catching from object to object, and spreading ruin over "cloud-capt towers, and gorgeous palaces, and solemn temples;" the triumphant approach, and the glorious retinue of the Son of God, may be the *least felt* of all the wonders of that day. Once heard, the voice of the Archangel may die away in unnoticed echoes; and soon the sublime and imposing spectacle of a world on fire, will pass away; once felt, the new creative power re-organizing the frame, and sending new vitality through the raised and quickened members, will be felt no more. The thoughts of the faithless husband and wife, like those of all the vast concourse of unpardoned rebels, will be turned to the more terrific and soul-harrowing fears that begin to agitate their own bosoms. The deepest emotion will be anxiety about your own doom. Bosom companions in the toils, and sorrows, and joys of the life that has past, and faithless only in the great subjects that are now to undergo a judicial investigation, and which pertain to the life to come, the result is to be pressed with terrible power upon your own spirits; and your bosoms are overwhelmed with the memory of the past, and the anticipation of what is now at hand. A life prayerless and (in re-

gard to all that was of real value) comfortless; days of mercy, and years of blessedness, unsanctified by the word of God and prayer, all will rush upon the spirit, and tell of a doom of inexpressible anguish. Now, no longer a prospect of union in joy, but either an eternal separation, or an eternal union in suffering the wrath of God and the Lamb. Kindred spirits still, but in anguish, in horror, in hell. And is it so? Does our voice reach a hapless husband and wife united in forgetfulness of God; united in a prayerless and rebellious life; united in the prospect of this sad, irreversible doom? Dying creatures, united in the tenderest bonds, even to be kindred spirits lost! 'Tis no delusion. A faithful God declares all we have said: for those who do not love and obey God here, hope, happiness, and *love*, will die at death; and the immortal spirits of the once affectionate and fair, will become hateful while they hate one another, and sink together into exile from God's presence, where is weeping, and wailing, and gnashing of teeth.

Oh, why should this be! There is a paradise of eternal peace; there are fields of everlasting blessedness; there is a union of kindred spirits on high; there is the changeless society of those we love: then why not say, we will arise and go to our Father. United in life, we will be united in death. Our spirits, kindred in holiness, as well as in love, shall dwell in the presence of eternal glory, and our first and eternal rest shall be "fast by the throne of God."

The religious relations and obligations of husband and wife having been considered, we will advert to those which grow out of the relation of PARENT and CHILD.

In whatever light we contemplate it, there is certainly no community so interesting, as that placed under the administration of parental government. The influence of the sentiments there inculcated, and of the principles of conduct there implanted, on the great political, moral and religious destinies of man, as well as on the present and future condition of the individual, render it the most attractive of all human associations. The point which we now urge is, that, in the organization of this community, there is a designed reference to the promotion of religion, and to the eternal destiny of the little empire beneath a parent's law.

That God has required such a reference to be duly regarded, is abundantly clear. Parents are commanded to bring up their children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. The commendation of Abraham, the example of Christ, and the uniform *religious direction* of their sentiments, when the sacred writers touch on the subject, conspire to prove that God regards this relation as having a reference, very direct and decided, to the advancement of religion.

We shall have occasion to show, presently, that no sentiments are so early, or so deeply engraven on the heart of a child, by the example and authority of a parent, as those connected with religion. The attempt of Christianity to give a religious reference to this relation, or to secure a religious influence from it, is not an attempt to obtain any new dominion over the tender spirit; but it is a wish to direct to the advancement of truth, an influence always felt, always recognised; and one by which every other religion has been propagated and maintained. Whoever contemplates the amazing influence by which the foulest Pagan rites are transmitted from generation to generation, and the silent and insensible power by which a hater of the Bible will convince his children, corrupt a family, and even a neighbourhood, will be satisfied that the religious reference claimed for this relation, is not peculiar to Christianity. The Hindoo sustains the ascendancy of his religion, from age to age, by corrupt and imposing ceremonies, to which their children early become attached. The Mussulman recounts the battles of the Prophet, unfurls the banners of war, displays the trophies of victory, and teaches the infant soul to pant with ambitious desires—thus connecting his religion with the very existence and glory of his nation. The very savage teaches his war-song to his sons; lives his life again in their feelings and sentiments; and dies composedly, only when he is satisfied that these feelings and sentiments will descend from age to age. So, when unhappy France, in the “reign of terror,” wished to blot out the name of the Son of God, and prevent the religious influence of this and all other relations of life, she desecrated and closed the temples of religion; demolished the places of learning; and sent the writings of Voltaire to parents and children at the fire-side, to be read by them, and to be the subject of family conversation. So the infidel, and the errorist, will fill his dwelling with books and pamphlets, such as inculcate their respective views, and revile and ridicule the religion of the gospel, with almost every breath, while they declaim against any system that will have a tendency to form or control the religious sentiments of their children.

It will not be doubted, we apprehend, that if it is lawful to exert any influence over others, on the great subject of religion, the relation of parent and child is eminently adapted to the exertion of such an influence. The peculiar intimacy and tenderness of the association; the dependence of the child; and the deference and respect claimed and rendered on other subjects, render this relation peculiarly auspicious to the great purpose of advancing the interests of religion. The habits of

subjection, and the confidence and veneration with which the little community *must* look up to parental government, open a flowery way to the bosom of a child. No person exerts so direct an influence over *mind* as a parent can exert; and it is evidently as easy to exert that influence in promoting the advancement of religion, as in forming any other sentiments. To the words of a parent's lips the child listens with profound deference; and why should not those words accord with eternal truth, and convey impressions that shall conduce to the present and eternal welfare of the child?

If we have any faith in any system of religion, it is impossible to believe that God has grouped this little community together for any temporary or unimportant purpose. It narrows all our conceptions of His benignant purposes, to believe that the tenderness of these ties has relation only to those accomplishments, and that education, which the purposes of this life may require. To believe that all the affection of parents, all their toil and anxiety, and all the watchfulness and self-denial that are incident to the very nature of the relation, are called forth in reference to an existence that may terminate to-morrow, presents a view of the purposes of God, that we find nowhere else. The brute loves and protects its young for a season, but as soon as it is capable of providing for itself, all ties are dissolved, and never again recognised. There is no reflection, no anticipation, no hopes, no fears, no sorrows or joys. The sentiment we are combatting is at war with our philosophy, no less than with our religion. It is only where our conceptions of this relation embrace eternal interests, and bring before the mind traces of parental influence in the far distant ages of futurity, that we can understand parental feeling and duty. Let the relation stretch into eternity, and there is a field wide enough for all a parent's love; there are interests enough to justify his intense care and solicitude. It is the instinctive feeling of a Father's bosom that he *ought* to have an influence upon his family, through the whole of their being—that if destined to live after they shall have left his immediate control, still his own sentiments should start up anew in this fresh soil; if to suffer much, that he should fit them for it; if to die early, that his affection and fidelity should be remembered in their future being. Society requires this at a parent's hand. It is the law of God, identifying him, in some degree, with his children, and prompting him, as with a voice from heaven, to bear the feelings and principles of the coming world to the bosom of his household.

This instinctive feeling of a parent, is justified by all the sober views which he can take of his duty. It will be seen that

religion eminently conduces to the welfare of his children in every form. It will be seen, that the conviction that they must pass through much suffering, where nothing but religion can comfort them, calls for an early infusion of the sentiments of piety. It will be seen, that the little empire will be more entirely subject to his law, if he calls in the aid of religious sanctions; a conscience enlightened by religious truth, and made prompt and peremptory in its decisions, will be a shield from evil; a hope of eternal peace and joy, originated and nurtured by religion, will sustain them in trial, guard them in temptation, and comfort them in death. On no point in all their future biography, can he fix, where some substantial benefit will not be obtained by the favour of God—favour most easily obtained, and most certainly secured, when the maxims of religion, flowing from a parent's lips, and illustrated and enforced by a parent's precept and example, are mingled with the earliest thoughts and feelings of the infant bosom, and incorporated, by the grace of God, into the very frame and substance of the moral nature.

ART. IV.—THE ANNUAL REPORT of the *St. Louis (Mo.) Sunday School, Auxiliary to the Sunday School Union of the Methodist Episcopal Church.* pp. 8.

Although a very unpretending document in size and appearance, the Report before us is calculated to do much evil. It will certainly mislead those who rely upon it for correct information, and it cannot be read and believed without great wrong to the cause of truth and justice.

We shall attempt to expose some of the errors into which we think our friends have fallen, and shall endeavour, at the same time, to present things truly, as they have come to our knowledge, and according to the best of our understanding.

We are induced to do this the rather, on the present occasion, because so much exertion has been made to circulate the Report of the St. Louis School; and we are credibly informed, that many intelligent and well-disposed people, friends to the institution of Sunday Schools, have been led to give heed to the statements it contains, and have thus been filled with violent and groundless prejudices against us, and the cause we advocate.

We wish it to be distinctly understood, (as we trust we shall show by better evidence than profession,) that we have not a single unkind feeling towards the authors, distributors, or friends of this Report, or of the opinions it maintains. The institution, whose interests we have espoused, is public property. If the report of our *St. Louis* friends, respecting us, is "the truth,

the whole truth, and nothing but the truth," we could not claim, nor should we receive, the confidence or respect of the public a single moment. It is right and proper, therefore, that we should endeavour to show wherein we think we suffer wrong.

The remarks with which the Report is introduced are just and sensible; and so great is the incongruity between the spirit which seems to have inspired them, and that which the residue of the Report breathes, that we should hardly suppose they could have been written by the same hand.

Your Superintendents believe that there is but one opinion, among the enlightened friends of Sabbath School instruction, as to the grand object to be gained: it is to seize the first opportunity—to lay hold of the human mind in the earliest stages of its being, and mould it according to the pattern of divine morals contained in the New Covenant—to imbue it with scriptural notions of the great God, the infinite perfections of his nature, the extent of his providence, and the spirituality of his worship—to inspire it with just conceptions of its own moral and individual accountability to God—to give it clear views of the mutual obligations subsisting between man and man; in a word, to implant in the mind, by the grace of Heaven, the only scriptural principles of moral action, which is love to God and love to man; and thereby prepare the rising generation for the reciprocal exercise of all kind and social affections, which is the balm of human life. Thus viewed, in what an interesting point of light do these nurseries of human kind appear!

The almost incredible amount of good already accomplished through this system of moral instruction, precludes, in some degree, the necessity of our saying any thing at this time in support of its claims on the friends of mankind. When we speak of Sabbath Schools, we no longer theorise; we point you to them in successful operation, with hundreds of thousands of children in attendance; and time would fail us to recount the beneficial effects flowing from this source of good to man. Few men are found, at this day, sceptical enough to doubt their utility; the only question seems to be, how shall we best succeed in establishing them every where?

On this point there is, no doubt, an honest difference of opinion. The friends and patrons of the American Sunday School Union would unite all religious denominations in one general society.

The Report then proceeds to show the evils, or rather the impracticability of such a scheme.

But we should remember that these religious bodies have grown, not only out of a difference of opinion as to the essential doctrines of the Gospel, but also from a difference of opinion as to the best plans of doing good. This being the fact, there must be discordant views in a body composed of such materials; in which event it becomes necessary to compromise—parts of the respective plans of each must be surrendered for the sake of unity and action.

Here we are compelled to meet the Report with an unqualified contradiction. If the American Sunday School Union is "a body composed of such materials," it is not true that there are discordant views, or that the plans or parts of the plans of either must be surrendered for the sake of unity and action. Of course, all the argument which rests on these premises is without any force: for the sake of showing, however, what the argument would be, if the premises were true, we extract it.

But so far as you deprive a man of the privilege of acting according to what he deems the best plan of operation, so far you paralyze his active energies; for unless there is, in the opinion of an intelligent agent, a fit adaptation of means to gain the end proposed, there is no rational motive for action. We are disposed to believe, that if each denomination of Christians in this country were alive to the great importance of the Schools, and would engage actively in their own way, and according to their own plans, to furnish the whole community with them, the work would be effected much sooner than ever it will be by any national combination.

The only difficulty with the next paragraph of the Report is that it wants facts to sustain its statements.

From what considerations the Protestant Episcopal Church has a separate and distinct Sabbath School Union, we know not: she is of age, and can speak for herself. The Sunday School Union of the Methodist Episcopal Church originated with the General Conference of the travelling preachers; and although we have been most severely censured for the act, yet we believe it was a decision both wise and prudent. The Methodist Church in the United States numbers about half a million of communicants. These, with four or five times their number, who are attached to the doctrine and discipline of the Church, all looked to her ministers for religious instruction for themselves and their children; and that, too, in accordance with the known standard doctrines of the Church, and with the least possible expense. As members of the Methodist Episcopal Church, believing in the purity of her doctrines, and the wisdom of her ecclesiastical economy, all this is right: they should wish their children brought up in the belief of those doctrines, and with favourable views of their own church government. We ask, is it likely that the American Sunday School Union would have yielded to the wishes of our members and friends? We confidently answer—No; and we will not disguise the fact, that we are too fully convinced of the purity of our peculiar doctrines, and the fitness and expediency of our distinguishing church usages, ever to engage in any national, or other combination, where we would be under the necessity of suppressing one jot or tittle of what is peculiar to us.

Now, it is a fact, capable of proof, and we are ready to prove it before any body of intelligent and upright men, (such as would be selected to decide a suit in a court of law,) that the American Sunday School Union has *always* “yielded to the wishes of the members and friends” of the Methodist denomination; and that not “one jot or tittle of what is peculiar to them” has ever been required or asked to be suppressed: on the contrary, we can show, conclusively, that the American Sunday School Union has never, in any form, interfered with the inculcation of just such doctrines and views as the denomination, who have charge of the schools, respectively, are pleased to inculcate; the Methodists have not, nor has any other denomination connected with the American Sunday School Union, ever yielded a single point of doctrine or usage. Every Methodist member of our Board might be the Superintendent of an exclusive Methodist School—he might refuse our library books, and our manuals of instruction, on the ground that they

do not inculcate the peculiar views of his denomination; and, in one word, he might be devoted, with all his heart and soul, to the propagation of the doctrines, and the defence of the usages, of the Methodist Church,—every where but at our Board; and, at the same time, be a faithful and devoted Manager there—always at his post—ready to every good word and work, and forgetting every denominational distinction, while he contributed his full share of counsel and effort towards the diffusion of gospel light and liberty. And, in illustration or support of this remark, it may be stated, that at a late meeting of the Board, in the absence of the President, one of the Vice Presidents* (a Methodist) was called to the chair. He hastily nominated a committee, for some momentary purpose, and placed upon it two Episcopalians, and one Presbyterian. One of the former instantly declined, suggesting the propriety of nominating a Methodist or Baptist. The Vice President immediately replied, “*Upon my word, my brethren, I forgot that there was any such thing as denominations. I cannot remember it here.*”

To make the position we just now assumed still more intelligible, we suppose a school established in New York or Philadelphia, in connexion with a Methodist Church, composed of children of the members of that church, formed for the purpose of instructing such children in the doctrines and usages of that church, and placed under the immediate superintendence of one of the members of that church, connected with our Board. Now, we know not a principle of our Union which would be violated by such a member in such a measure. His fidelity to our cause would not be questioned for a moment; nor would he yield one inch of the ground he occupies with us, by such a course, though nothing but the Methodist Catechism should be taught,—none but Methodist books be read,—and none but Methodist usages be observed. So that, in truth, we yield every thing to denominations, while we deprive them of nothing.

If it should be asked, why we unite, if each denomination is left, after all, to do its own work in its own way? we answer, in the language of the Christian Advocate and Journal,—“while each sect rallies around the standard of its own denomination, in those places where their respective numbers admit of their doing so efficiently, let others combine together, and form an association,” and “agree to leave their distinctive peculiarities out of sight, and unitedly enforce the grand cardinal truths of Christianity, and inculcate the precepts of the gospel upon the minds of all; and to aid them in this work of charity let books

* Joseph L. Inglis, Esq.

be" prepared, "such as will give offence to none," who unite in the enterprise.

These are, *substantially*, the views of the denomination, whose Report is before us, as they have been recently expressed in their leading paper. They would, it is true, confine the operations of such a society to remote and destitute settlements, where the people have not the means of religious instruction; but we think the neighborhood in which we dwell,—our own town, county or State,—are as much entitled to the advantages of this union-organization, as distant places. And as to purchasing books of all the Unions, such as will give offence to none, it is manifest that such books would be precisely like those published by the American Sunday School Union: for it is very certain, that books containing the peculiar views of either denomination, would be rejected by one or more of the others. A book which shall be acceptable to all denominations, is not likely to be prepared by either one; and when all denominations unite to prepare it, they will produce books very much like ours.

If it were necessary to confirm this statement, we can produce evidence which, we are sure, our Methodist brethren will be slow to reject.

From the declaration,* made through the Christian Advocate and Journal, some two or three years since, by the members of the Board of the American Sunday School Union, who are of the Methodist denomination, we quote the following paragraph:

A majority of us have been Managers of the Society from its first organization; we have, generally, attended the meetings of the Board; taken part in its discussions, and voted on any of the questions presented in its deliberations, according to the dictates of our own judgment and volition. We have assisted on its most important committees, and have enjoyed a full share in the control of the various publications issued by the Institution. If any attempt has been made by any "one denomination," to diminish or usurp our influence, it has not come to our knowledge in such a form as can warrant us to credit the assertion.

It is not our intention to become apologists for the language or sentiments of every individual who may, at times, have been in the employ of the Institution, or connected with its auxiliaries; for when we consider the numbers who may, incidentally, hold relationship of this kind with the Society, we think it too much to expect of any system conducted by mortals, that all who, by authority, or otherwise, choose to avail themselves of its name, should be placed above censure.

Of that, however, which we do know, we hope we shall be permitted to testify; and we are prepared to say, that as far as our knowledge extends, in regard to the schools, or individuals of our denomination, connected with the American Sunday School Union, the managers of the institution have never attempted to interfere, in any way, to the prejudice of those doctrines, rites,

* The pamphlet containing this declaration, may be had at the Depository of the American Sunday School Union, 146 Chesnut Street, Philadelphia.

or peculiarities, with which the Methodist society is identified, or by which it is distinguished from other denominations of Christians. Our opinions, our usages, and our feelings have been treated with respect; and in no instance have we been able to discover a spirit of hostility to our existing establishments, on the part of the Board, or any of its committees.

It seems to us, that such a declaration as this, from such a source, must satisfy our brethren of the St. Louis Sunday School, that they have, in this point, charged us hastily and unjustly.

But we pass to other topics of the Report.

There are other considerations why we should be in favour of a separate Union. The Methodist Connexion have been engaged, for a great number of years, in erecting, with much expense of labour and of money, an extensive printing establishment in New York, from which we can obtain, on reasonable terms, all the books we wish for all purposes. Would it be wise for us to aid the American Sunday School Union in erecting an establishment in Philadelphia, for the transaction of their business, at an expense of thirty or forty thousand dollars, when we have one already erected and paid for, which rigidly applies all its profits to the support of our Itinerating ministry—the way-worn, superannuated preacher, the forlorn widow, and her helpless children?

Once more. There are in the service of the Methodist Episcopal Church, about eighteen hundred travelling preachers, whose duty it is to establish Sabbath Schools, and to nourish and cherish them every where—to raise subscriptions, procure suitable books, and render them every facility; and that, too, without the additional charge of one cent. We ask again, would it be wise in us to contribute of our little means to pay to ministers and others, mostly of the Calvinistic School, and of the Presbyterian Church, salaries of from four to six hundred dollars a year each, to act as Sunday School agents, when we have them of our own Church, without any additional charge?

We cannot pretend to say in what manner the funds of the American Sunday School Union have been expended. We have noticed, in the Appendix to Rev. Mr. Wayland's Sermon, (published by the Union,) a letter of one of its patrons, in which he expresses considerable alarm, that out of 70 or \$80,000, *forty thousand* should have been paid out to *fleeting agents*. Now, with \$50,000, the Methodist Episcopal Church would pledge herself to establish Sabbath Schools in every district of the valley of the Mississippi, where there are people willing to have them. If any be at a loss to know how we could effect it with this sum, we refer them to our general economy, which is so rigid and systematic, that

“ We make our little money go
Farther than other people do.”

We may be allowed to ask, have not the funds of the American Sunday School Union been used to build up a particular denomination in the West and elsewhere? We are induced to ask this question from the fact, that in 1826 the Union reports the employment of thirty-one missionaries the preceding year, and avows the determination further to prosecute that department of its labours. To what extent they have done this we cannot say, not having the reports at hand. The Report for the year ending May 1st, 1830, says, that thirteen missionaries were employed the preceding year, whose aggregate labour was equal to seven years and nine months, at the cost of \$3,150; during the same period, there were employed nine agents, at the cost of \$1,630, making the sum of \$4,780. This sum would employ forty-seven

single preachers of the Methodist Church for one year, whose aggregate labour would be equal to forty-seven years. As to the character of the missionaries and agents employed by the American Union, we take no exceptions: they, no doubt, were good men, well selected; but all, so far as our knowledge extends, from one denomination, who, while labouring to establish Sabbath Schools, no doubt laboured to build up their own Church. The Presbyterian Church may have stronger claims than all others, or hers may be the only "*competent*" ministers, or she may have the balance of power in the Board of Managers: be that as it may, her ministers seem to be the men. Now, we, as members of the Methodist Episcopal Church, are unwilling to become tributary to her, and aid, through her American Sunday School operations, in the dissemination of doctrines to which we cannot subscribe.

In this extract we have several distinct propositions:

1. That the Methodist connexion have an extensive printing establishment at New York, erected and paid for, from which they can obtain, on reasonable terms, all the books they wish, for all purposes; and, at the same time, be sure that the surplus profits will go to the support of certain persons connected with the ministry of that Church; and

2. That by remaining with the American Sunday School Union, they would be compelled to aid in erecting an establishment in Philadelphia, for the transaction of the business of that Union, at an expense of thirty or forty thousand dollars.

We have no doubt of the general correctness of the former part of this statement. Our brethren have, certainly, a perfect right to judge how great a variety of books is needful for their Schools, and what character they shall sustain; and they have a right to appropriate the profits on those sales to what purpose they please, nor should we ever raise a finger, or utter a word against their free exercise of these rights. But if they see fit to call in question *our* plans, and to institute a comparison between their modes of operation and ours, with a view to show that ours are unworthy of confidence, they must suffer us to follow out the comparison, and show in what points it favours the cause of union.

No individual school or society, that attaches itself to the American Sunday School Union, or buys our books, or contributes to our funds, is involved in any expense on account of "erecting an establishment in Philadelphia, for the transaction of our business." The liberality of individuals in that city alone has precluded the necessity of any appeal to the public on this behalf. The "*establishment*" is, therefore, a free gift to the Society: and we are enabled to devote the profits of our business, not to the support of the widows and children of our agents and missionaries, who are spending their strength in our service, and who, in nine cases out of ten, if compelled, at this moment, to leave their families, would leave them entirely without the means

of support; but to extend still further the blessings of Sunday Schools, and increase still more their usefulness and efficiency. This is our plan. We do not say it is as good as that of our brethren, but if they object to it, it ought to be fairly exhibited, that the force of their objections may be justly estimated. Let it not be understood that we think the appropriation of the profits of the printing establishment at New York is, in any manner, objectionable. The question of its propriety or impropriety does not enter into our consideration at all. The *St. Louis Report* contends, that it is wiser and better for Methodists to buy their books at New York, where a printing office is established, the profits of which go to support the Methodist itinerating ministry, (a body of most laborious and self-denying men,) than to aid the American Sunday School Union in erecting an establishment at Philadelphia, at an expense of thirty or forty thousand dollars, the profits of which are differently appropriated. We only deny the fact that any such aid is asked, in erecting an establishment at Philadelphia, and state, first, how our profits are not appropriated, and, secondly, how they are appropriated. The facts are easily settled, and the principles of the two institutions are to be approved or rejected, like any other principles, upon a just consideration of their character and tendency.

The second proposition is that the Methodists can avail themselves of the services of their 1800 travelling preachers to do that which our agents and missionaries are appointed to do, without the additional charge of one cent, and that by remaining in connexion with us, they will be obliged to contribute of their little means to pay ministers and others, mostly Calvinistic Presbyterian, at salaries of \$400 or 600.

If this is a fair statement of the case, it is certainly a triumphant vindication of the course which the *St. Louis Report* defends. But is it fair? Is it even true? Where do the surplus profits come from, which constitute the fund for widows and children? Is it not in part raised upon books, like all similar concerns? Do 1800 men eat, drink, sleep, and travel, without a tax upon any body? Is a fund raised for the support of their families, after their decease, without a tax upon any body? Is the concern at New York sustained without a tax on any body? Our Methodist brethren pay, and we doubt not, most cheerfully and liberally, to support and propagate their religious views and plans; every man is taxed, and, we presume, is willing to be taxed with his share of the expense, so far as expense is necessary; and a little profit on the books—a little profit on the periodicals,—a little free-will contribution from all who love the cause—will make up the sum which is

very justly and nobly distributed among their superannuated preachers, their forlorn widows, and their helpless children.

This is the way we make up our fund, and how do we spend it? The Methodist brethren of our Board know. They are not men who will stand by, and see the contributions of the friends of Sunday Schools appropriated to the support of sectarians, or to the propagation of sectarian views. We know them too well to suffer an implied charge of this nature to pass in silence. The simple truth is, that for one dollar which comes from Methodists to support a Presbyterian missionary or agent, we receive one hundred dollars from Presbyterians, to support Methodist missionaries and agents, and it comes, we trust, without an inquiry who it is to support, except,—Are they honest? are they capable—will they support the principles of your Union? We have men of the Methodist denomination in our employ as missionaries, whom it is a privilege to pay for their services. They are men of noble views, devoted piety, and untiring zeal; and great will be their reward. We have no men in the field, whom the society pays for their labour more cheerfully, or whose services are more highly valued, or in whom we can have more confidence, than those who belong to the Methodist denomination; and we can prove, before any legal tribunal that our St. Louis friends may select, that their assertion that our Sunday School agents are mostly of the Presbyterian church, is as utterly without foundation, as would be a report, that our agents are mostly persons who have but one arm or one eye.

We can hardly conceive that the St. Louis brethren supposed that they were doing by us as they would have us to do by them, when they made their statement respecting the manner in which the funds of the American Sunday School Union *have been* expended. Is it to be believed that they had no design or desire to mislead? What are the facts?

A correspondent of ours, who never gave a farthing to the Society, (and who is, therefore, styled in the report, one of our "patrons," by way of embellishment,) wrote as follows, respecting the best mode of prosecuting the proposed enterprise:

"Auburn, July 9th, 1830.

"With a deep interest myself in the Sabbath School enterprise, I cannot refrain from expressing a hope that all possible use will be made of agents on the spot to plant and foster schools. They may generally be found, and with one experienced and intelligent *travelling* agent to look them up, and keep them up, they will do the largest part of the work gratuitously. It is alarming to see \$40,000 out of \$70,000 or \$80,000 given for this benevolent enterprise, consumed in the support of a fleeting agency."

At the time this letter was written, our resolution had been

passed a little better than a month—only three appointments had then been made under that resolution; neither of the individuals appointed had entered on his field of labour, and only \$1870,99 had been received for the valley enterprise. Yet the *St. Louis Report* gives its readers to understand that if the statement published by the Union, in the appendix to Dr. Wayland's sermon is true, 40,000 dollars out of 70 or 80,000 had been paid out to fleeting agencies, within a month after the resolution passed, and before 2,000 dollars had been received under it, much to the alarm of one of our patrons, who never gave us a farthing!

The pledge proposed to be made by the Methodist Episcopal Church, to establish Sabbath Schools in every district in the Valley, where they are willing to have them, for \$50,000, is worthy of a moment's consideration.

If the pledge should be accepted, it would of course become necessary that books for libraries should be obtained at New York. Such a market would not be a small matter. Then, a Methodist Sunday School in every district in the Valley would be quite an accession to their means of propagating their views, and perfectly fair means, if fairly obtained. Any denomination would be culpably indifferent to duty, if, to avoid an expense of \$50,000 they would forego such an opportunity of training a generation to the knowledge of the truth, as they hold it. But will this meet the views of those who have contributed to this object? It will not be pretended. So that, though a particular denomination might, by availing itself of its existing means, to propagate its own views, succeed in redeeming such a pledge, at an expense of \$50,000, it would, by no means, follow, when the enterprise is taken up independently, and prosecuted under a system of means devised expressly for, and adapted expressly to this single department, that the expense will be the same. But all this apart, it yet remains to be seen whether the American Sunday School Union does not accomplish the work of establishing schools simply, (donations of libraries not included,) with even less than the amount for which a single denomination would accomplish it. If so, we shall have found out another advantage of union, inasmuch as it will appear that ours is, after all, the rigid and systematic economy by which

"We make our little money go
Farther than other people do",

and that various denominations can unitedly and efficiently accomplish for the advancement of the kingdom of our com-

mon Lord, more than any one denomination can accomplish, single-handed; and thus it will be proved, that that which is of obviously great consideration in an estimate of moral means, is not of inconsiderable importance in a pecuniary view.

The question asked respecting the employment of our funds to build up a particular denomination in the west and elsewhere, is designed to answer itself. In such a connexion, and from such a source, and so phrased, the very proposition of the question is an affirmative allegation. Why was the question asked? The Report gives as the reason—because we have employed a certain number of missionaries at a certain sum. This is the reason. They are “induced to ask (the) question from (this) fact.” Look back to the sentence, as it stands in an extract from the Report, and judge if the reason for asking such a question, in such a form, is satisfactory.

It appears, as they allege, and, we presume, correctly, that twenty-five persons were employed in the year ending May 1, 1830, at an expense of \$4,780. Of these, thirteen were missionaries whose labour cost at the rate of little less than \$400 each per annum, out of which they must pay their expenses; and nine were agents whose term of service is not averaged: the whole expense is \$1,630 for the year. Now to show the contrast, they tell us, that for the same sum they will give forty-seven years of Methodist labour, or the labour of forty-seven single preachers of the Methodist church. This is certainly a much longer time; but we have thought it inexpedient to enquire for single men, and, indeed, have sometimes preferred men with families. And besides all this, until the economy of the Methodist Church, respecting the support of her servants, shall have been adopted by other denominations, we cannot expect that labourers of other denominations will accept of agencies under us on such terms, as to the preachers in the Methodist connexion might seem sufficiently liberal. With the same arrangement in other denominations for the temporal advantage of a missionary, which is provided by our Methodist brethren for their preachers, we could probably obtain a sufficient agency for our purpose at the same rate. For it is a matter of no small consideration with a man who engages in the service of the Methodist Church, that a fund is set apart for his relief in old age, and for the comfort of his wife and children, when he shall be separated from them by death; * and though this fund may afford an inconsiderable di-

* It will be remembered, in this connexion, that every book and every newspaper which is sold at a profit, increases this fund; and every individual, therefore, who is likely to be dependent on it, in any measure, for support, has a direct pecuniary interest in multiplying the means of its in-

vidend at the present moment, it will be remembered, (as the report before us shows,) that there flows into it, the profits of probably the most extensive printing establishment* on this continent. What these profits are, and how rapidly they accumulate, is known to those who are depending on them for present or prospective relief.

We will add here, lest it should escape our recollection, that

crease. He is, in fact, providing for himself and his family, though we doubt not he is, at the same time, faithfully engaged in promoting the cause of his divine Master.

If it should be asked, why we enter into this exposition of the economy of the Methodist Church? it is a sufficient answer that we are driven to it by the course which the St. Louis School has taken, in the report before us.

No one can doubt that the *design* (we do not say, tendency,) of that report is to excite the public mind against the American Sunday School Union, and thus defeat its purposes of benevolence, by showing, in contrast, the supposed superiority of a different system. Into the fitness or utility of the system for whose superiority the report contends, it is neither our disposition or right to inquire. But however well adapted it may be to advance the interests of a particular church or denomination, any fair examination of it will show, that it is entirely unsuited to the purposes of a religious benevolent society, constituted like ours: and while so constituted, the employment of our agents must be temporary, and their compensation must be present and definite, and cannot extend, in any form, beyond the term of actual service.

Of course, we can hold out no prospective advantages as an inducement to labour for us at a present sacrifice, nor does the nature of the service required by us admit a resort to any collateral pursuit for the means of living.

The case then stands thus. The American Sunday School Union employs eight men, (married or single, as the case may be.) They receive four hundred dollars each, defray their own expenses, and devote their time and energies to the establishment and improvement of Sunday Schools, and, they do nothing else.

The Methodist brethren, on the other hand, employ thirty-two *single* men, to propagate their views and usages—to advance the interests and sustain the economy of their church, and to establish Sunday Schools auxiliary to their union, and to theirs only, and by these and all other fair means, (direct or indirect,) build up the cause they justly love—enlarge the operation of the book concern at New York, and thereby increase the fund on which they are to draw for support in old age, and on which the families they leave at death, are to depend for relief: and in consideration of this service, they are entitled to the hospitality of their brethren—to a dividend from the fund which their labours contribute to raise, and to one hundred dollars each, in hand, for present wants. Can any just comparison be drawn between the compensation for services so entirely different in their character and design?

* A late periodical paper has stated that the number of persons employed in this establishment, (the Methodist Book Concern in New York,) is 73 men, 47 boys, and 39 females—total 150. The number of printing presses in constant operation is 18, and one proof press, together with a Napier power press, equal to four common presses, for the printing of the Christian Advocate and Journal, of which 20,000 copies are said to be published weekly.

the whole argument respecting the capacity of our Methodist brethren to do Sunday School work cheaper than we can do it, may be met and refuted by a single fact, capable of proof, if not apparent to the most superficial observer. *The establishment of Sunday Schools requires more time and labour than any stated preacher of the gospel, of any denomination, can bestow, without neglecting his professional duty.* Ministerial appointments are never expected to yield to any thing else, and a preacher who has a distant engagement, will spend half an hour less in the organization of a school, rather than be half an hour beyond his time, at the place of preaching.

We have been slow to believe (says our last annual report) that the business of establishing Sunday Schools could be prosecuted very efficiently by the same individual contemporaneously with any other object. Our persuasion has rather been, that if any purpose requires the devotion of every intellectual, moral, and physical energy of man for the time being, it is the establishment of Sunday Schools, on a firm and enduring basis, in the Valley of the Mississippi.

We have the testimony of ministers of all denominations to this point, that the successful prosecution of a Sunday School agency is not to be expected, unless the agent is unembarrassed by any other avocation. In the places where they preach, or near which they reside, they may establish and preserve schools: but the length and breadth of the land will never be surveyed, nor will the habitations of darkness and ignorance ever be generally enlightened, unless we sustain an independent agency, occupied exclusively and continually by this single object.

Another allegation which our St. Louis brethren make against us is, that our missionaries and agents are all, so far as their knowledge extends, from the Presbyterian denomination, and that, in connexion with the establishment of schools, they labour to build up their own church. As it might occur to some minds, that this must be a very preposterous course for such a society as ours to take, unless they intended to destroy themselves utterly, the Report ironically assigns two or three odd reasons for it, and concludes by declining, (as they should,) to have any hand in the dissemination of Presbyterianism.

Now, we are prepared to prove, by legal evidence, that from May 25, 1830, (the time when the resolution to establish Sunday Schools in the Valley of the Mississippi passed,) up to April 10, 1831, (the time when the St. Louis report was made,) only fifty-nine appointments were made by the American Sunday School Union, of persons to labour in the Valley of the Mississippi. Of these fifteen were Baptists, twelve Presbyterians,

eight Methodists, eight Congregationalists, two Episcopalians, one Dutch Reformed, one Cumberland Presbyterian, and twelve whose denominations are not known to the Board.

We have not a word to add—the simple statement is either enough, or it is nothing, and “we submit this part of the case,” as the lawyers say, “without argument.”

As voluntary agents and missionaries receive no compensation at all, but merely offer their services, we are not responsible for their denominational views, nor do we ask them; and if we did, it would seem rather uncourteous to reject the voluntary service of a man, because his views were not like his neighbours, especially when his neighbour may have the same chance with himself.

But the gravest charge seems to have been reserved to close the series. It is indeed a grave charge, and, if true, our friends and supporters have been deceived and imposed upon—and the institution itself is utterly unworthy of confidence. It is in these words:

“If the American Sunday School Union were truly catholic in its spirit, its friends would rejoice to see Schools established, and in successful operation, attached to the Methodist or Episcopal Union; and they would not labour to *proselyte children from these Schools, promising them better instruction from Presbyterian teachers.*”

A correct paraphrase of this charge would be—You, the friends of the American Sunday School Union, do not rejoice to see schools established, and in successful operation, while they are attached to the Methodist and Episcopal Unions, but, on the contrary, you labour to proselyte children from Methodist and Episcopal Schools, by the promise that they will be better taught by Presbyterians.

There is but one way in which to meet such an allegation as this, and that is to deny it and ask for proof. There are two or three facts in the case to be sure, which have some bearing to show that the charge is unfounded. The above statement respecting the selection of missionaries and agents, is one—the language of our commissions to our missionaries and agents is another. These are printed forms, not varied to suit circumstances, but the same to all. The following are extracts:

“You will establish, revive, visit, and encourage Sunday Schools, *whether auxiliary to this Society, or not*, and urge upon the people to contribute money, to establish Depositories for the accommodation of Sunday Schools.

“It will be your special duty to visit all ministers of the gospel, and make known particularly to them, the nature and objects of your mission, and use your influence to engage them in promoting Sabbath Schools in their respective congregations *whether auxiliary to this Society or not*. Show no partiality to any denomination, but hold friendly intercourse with all who love

our Lord Jesus Christ. Auxiliaries of every denomination enjoy equal rights and privileges. The American Sunday School Union embraces Christians of almost every denomination, and seven of them are represented in its Board of Managers, and serve on its numerous committees, and the prosperity and usefulness of the institution, with the blessing of God, depend on the *cordial union and efficient support of all* the friends of Sunday Schools. The great object for which the American Sunday School Union was instituted, and which the Board prayerfully labours to accomplish, is to bring *every child and youth* of our country under the influence of the gospel, and thus *promote the glory of God, and not the interest of any denomination, sect, or party.*

"When an Agent or Missionary has established a school, and received *five dollars* towards the purchase of a library, and the people are unable to contribute more to this object, he will give an order, according to the above instructions, on the most convenient depository for books, to the amount of **TEN DOLLARS, whether auxiliary to the American Sunday School Union or not.** Only let there be such an organization as to afford a reasonable prospect of stability to the school, and they may belong **TO ANY UNION, OR TO NO UNION,** as they please."

This is a new plan of proselyting, surely. But it may be—yes—it may be, that we are deceived in these men, and in these facts, and in this language. It may be that there is a sort of delusive influence which takes possession of a man, as soon as he turns a complacent eye towards the American Sunday School Union, and that thenceforth he sees nothing, and hears nothing, and knows nothing as it really is. So that what we think is altogether catholic, and liberal and frank in our proceedings, is, in fact, bigotted, and sectarian, and insincere, however it may seem in our eyes; and that our course leaves it exceedingly doubtful whether we are weak men or hypocrites—fools or knaves.

But is it credible—is it even possible, that the American Sunday School Union can play such a game in the face of the American church and the American people, and still retain public confidence? Is there not intelligence and integrity enough among the friends and teachers of Sunday Schools of the various denominations connected with us, to shield us from an unsupported allegation, like this of our St. Louis brethren? Will such assertions make an impression on any fair, enlightened mind? Ought not facts to be stated, sufficiently numerous and well attested to sustain such a charge, and in connexion with it? Is an honest man's reputation no defence to him, and may he not safely interpose it between his character and the weapon of slander? May we not appeal to the organization of the Society itself—to the actual character and position of our schools—to the manner in which our agencies have been appointed and prosecuted—to the character of our publications, and to the general sentiment of wise, intelligent, and good men throughout the land, to disprove an unsupported charge, that

we are making proselytes to this or that denomination? Is it not for those who make the charge, to support or withdraw it; or shall we, contrary to the principle which protects a thief or an assassin, be presumed to be guilty, till we are proved innocent? But we need not multiply these interrogations: there is an obvious answer to them all.

In reviewing the remarks we have made on this subject, we find nothing which can be justly offensive to the Methodist brethren. It will be recollected that the *St. Louis Report* makes, and attempts to sustain, certain allegations:

I. That the plan of the American Sunday School Union is essentially defective; that it requires the sacrifice of denominational views and plans; and that it never would have yielded to the wishes of the Methodist Episcopal Church, that their children should be brought up in the belief of their doctrines, and with favourable views of their own Church government.

We have shown that these views are altogether unsupported by fact, and what the precise relation is which the different denominations embraced in our Union sustain to us and to each other.

II. The *St. Louis Report* alleges, that while they have an extensive printing establishment in New York, which the Methodist connexion have been engaged for a great number of years in erecting, with much expense of labour and of money, and from which they can obtain, on reasonable terms, all the books they want for all purposes, and all the profits of which are rigidly applied to the support of their itinerating ministry, it would be unwise in them to aid the American Sunday School Union in erecting an establishment in Philadelphia, at an expense of 30,000 or 40,000 dollars.

We show, in answer to this, that the establishment at Philadelphia is as free as the establishment at New York, and asks no more aid of its friends.

III. The *St. Louis Report* alleges, that the Agents of the American Sunday School Union are mostly of the Calvinistic school, and of the Presbyterian church; that they receive salaries of from four to six hundred dollars a year each, while the 1,800 preachers of their own Church may be had without any additional charge.

To meet this allegation, we have stated to what denominations our Agents belong, and how many are taken from each; and we have attempted to satisfy our readers, that the apparent difference of expense arises chiefly from the difference of the objects, and the different systems of operation which are suited to accomplish them.

Passing over the various forms in which these allegations are made and repeated, and which, we think, are all covered by our defence, we come to the last charge, which is:—

IV. That we labour to proselyte children from the schools of the Methodist and Episcopal Unions, by promising them better instruction from Presbyterian teachers.

This charge we refute by showing how entirely at war such a course of proceeding is with all the instructions given to our Missionaries and Agents, with the spirit of all our publications, and with the vital principle of our existence.

In meeting and rebutting these grave charges, it has been necessary to enter into the consideration of topics which we would willingly have left untouched. We have no controversy with any Christian man or denomination on earth. We desire to build up the Redeemer's cause, and not to pull down the labour of other hands; as well designed, and, perhaps, as well applied, as our own. Our measures are open to public examination; nor would we desire to screen them from the most rigid scrutiny, nor (if deserved) from the most unqualified censure. It is our duty, however, to explain them when misapprehended, and to defend them when they are unjustly assailed, or falsely represented.

If, in doing this, (in the present case,) we have offended any man, it has been done inadvertently, and we hope that, regarding it in this light, he will forgive us.

With the expression of this feeling on our part, we will extract a passage from the close of the report, which, we trust, will leave an agreeable impression on the reader's mind. However we may differ about the means, such results as we here find, bring us together again, and whether our brethren will give heed to it or not, we do most solemnly and seriously assure them, that it gives us no less joy, to see the true soldiers of the cross enlisting under their banner, than to see them enlisting under the banner of any other tribe in the whole host of Israel.

"In the white School, during the preceding year, two of the children, and one teacher have become members of our Church, and by their consistent deportment, clearly manifest the sincerity of their desire to be saved from their sins; and we greatly rejoice that we have lately witnessed gracious indications of the work of the Holy Spirit on the hearts of many others. On more occasions than one, several of our scholars have presented themselves at the altar, requesting an interest in the prayers of God's people, and manifesting a desire to escape from the wrath to come. We humbly trust that God is about to visit us, and send a time of refreshing from his presence."

ART. IV.—A PLEA FOR SUNDAY SCHOOLS.

We have received from a friend in Cincinnati, a copy of a discourse preached in that place, last November, by Rev. Dr. Aydelott, of the Episcopal Church, and published by the Cincinnati Sunday School Union, at whose solicitation it was delivered.

The text is "Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might." Ecc. ix. 10, and the preacher's object is to show, that whatever in the course of Providence is manifestly our duty, ought to be entered upon heartily and without delay, and that the support of Sunday Schools is but a duty.

At to the cause itself, our author shows,

1st. That an enlightened philanthropy pleads for it.

A vast amount of the vice and wretchedness that overspreads the earth, has undoubtedly arisen from the ignorance of its inhabitants, and will only be remedied when this ignorance is removed. I am not one of those, however, who suppose that the mere diffusion of learning will raise the human family to virtue and happiness. Far from this,—I believe that bare intellectual illumination is one of the greatest curses that can befall any of our race. Knowledge without right affections, is a sword in the hands of a fool. Learning without the proper culture of the heart, only enables a man more successfully to "cast fire-brands, arrows, and death." How many illiterate infidels of the last half century, after poisoning their little circle, are now harmlessly rotting in their graves! while a Hume and a Byron yet breathe infection over both hemispheres. Their writings still remain sources of pollution and death to thousands of immortal minds.

But, my hearers, if perverted learning has slain its thousands, ignorance has slain its tens of thousands. Indeed, were it not for the ignorance of multitudes, infidelity would be comparatively harmless. The best way, therefore, to check the march of irreligious and immoral principles, is to fortify the mind with sound christian instruction—instruction which, while it enlightens the understanding, regulates the affections and secures to conscience its rightful sovereignty. Now this is precisely what Sunday Schools are calculated to accomplish.

But let it be considered that ignorance is mischievous, not merely because it spreads open a hot bed, in which the baleful seeds of infidelity may be most successfully scattered—it also lies at the foundation of a vast deal of that parental mismanagement, which is inflicting its woes on myriads, and it is the principal cause of those hosts of evils that overspread our common schools, and make it in many cases questionable whether our children get most benefit or injury at them. Doubtless there are many parents who are ruining their children, but who would do better, if they knew how; and there are many teachers who have the welfare of their scholars honestly at heart, and still unwittingly they pursue a system, and give into a conduct that exert a pernicious influence over those committed to their charge. Now, my friends, will not experience—sober calculating experience, warrant the assertion, that when every father and mother in our land, and every man and woman engaged as teachers among us, shall have enjoyed the advantages of a full course of Sunday School instruction, they will be much better qualified to discharge their important duties, and thus one of the most copious sources of vice and wretchedness be dried up. Surely then, an intelligent concern for the virtue and happiness of the human family ought to commend the Sunday School cause to our best regards.

2d. That an enlightened patriotism sees the necessity, and demands the support of Sunday Schools.

We believe our form of government to be the best under heaven. The energies of every other nation are more or less clogged by arbitrary power and unreasonable institutions, so as, in many cases, to make the mass of the

people degraded and miserable. Look at Spain and the two Sicilies—with a fertile soil and a benign sky, and yet how poor, ignorant, and wretched!

But here, in this happy land, nothing is restrained except evil doing. Individual enterprise is left free to pursue their objects. Hence our beloved country exhibits a scene of progressive improvement, prosperity, happiness, and widely-diffused intelligence, without a parallel in the history of nations. And need I say, my hearers, what it is that constitutes the strong pillar which upholds a government fraught with such blessings? I need not, for the truth continually meets your eye in our executive messages, it is thundered upon the ear from all our halls of legislation, it is daily poured upon the mind from the innumerable presses of our land, it is consecrated in every pulpit:—yes, a voice comes up from the whole country proclaiming the great truth, that **A VIRTUOUS EDUCATION—A VIRTUOUS EDUCATION—IS THE CORNER STONE OF OUR NATIONAL HAPPINESS—THE STRONG ROCK ON WHICH OUR REPUBLIC RESTS.**

And as we believe our form of government to be the *best*, so it might be the *worst*. Let but the free and unrestrained millions of these United States become an ignorant and vitiated population; and who does not see, that in the heaving and breaking up of this mighty mass which must ensue, a burning tide would be rolled over the land, more withering and desolating than the fiery streams of Vesuvius! For such self-inflicted miseries, I can conceive no probable remedy, other than that which an insulted but merciful Heaven usually supplies, in raising up some iron-sceptred despot to restrain the madness of the people. Let every one, then, who loves his country, every one who prizes its free institutions, put forth his hand to the work of Sunday Schools. They are the best humanly devised means of diffusing a virtuous education among the people.*

And 3d. A regard to the interests of true religion must lead us to sustain Sunday Schools.

I know, beloved brethren, there are innumerable instances in which "the preaching of the cross" has proved to the most illiterate hearers "the power of God unto salvation." Multitudes of the most ignorant and debased of our species have been brought to the light and the exalted privileges of the gospel. Still does it not hold true, as a general principle, that a certain degree of previous culture gives immense advantages to the gospel in working its appropriate effects upon the consciences and characters of men? How slender and precarious would be the crop where the soil had undergone no preparation for sowing!—so, also, is it, to a certain extent in the moral world. Every observing Christian must, I think, be convinced that there is a certain preparation of mind, which gives promise of a more sure, and far greater return for the good seed of the word that may be scattered over a congregation.

We sometimes hear ministers found fault with, that they do not bring their subjects down to the level of the people, that they do not use words and phrases plain enough for the understanding of their hearers. I do not stand here, on this occasion, to vindicate ministers, and indeed I fear that the charge just noticed, is in some cases, too well grounded; still, may it not be seriously questioned, whether the fault is altogether with them, whether others also ought not to be brought in for a share of the guilt? Let it be considered that it is the business of the minister to preach the gospel, and

* Few men, not professional instructors, are doing so much to promote the cause of a sound, christian education, as Thomas S. Grimke, Esq. of Charleston, South Carolina. His addresses on this subject are characterised by vigour of style and originality of thought, and breathe throughout, a bold, independent, benevolent mind.

that the bare possession of mind on the part of the congregation, is not all that is desirable in them. Something else is ordinarily necessary to make a man an intelligent hearer. And as it is the minister's duty to preach the gospel, so it is commonly the duty of others to prepare the hearers for a profitable attendance on the word. Now, of all the means for furnishing this important preparation, with which I am acquainted, I know of none, except parental culture, so promising as the efforts of Sunday School teachers. In Sunday Schools, it is designed that every lesson given, every rule of discipline adopted, every encouragement held out to the scholars, should tend to bring them into a more intimate acquaintance with the Bible, and graft habits of piety upon them, and thus make them intelligent hearers of the word.

Where then, my friends, can we look with such confidence for hearers duly prepared to understand the peculiar truths of the gospel, and feel its influence in their heart, as among those who have enjoyed the advantages of Sunday School instruction? Contemplated in this point of view, these institutions may be truly called the nurseries of the Church.

Among the excuses for not engaging in the active duties of the Sunday School, Dr. Aydelott mentions and replies to the following:

1. "I can find *no particular precept* in the Bible, enjoining upon me to engage in the work of Sunday Schools:"—this is an excuse sometimes heard.

It is readily granted that there is not a special command, binding this duty upon us in so many words, though it might easily be shown that the spirit of the whole law does thus obligate us. But it is not on this ground alone, I would meet such an objector: there is another view of the case to which we are clearly directed in holy writ.

We read in the xvi ch. of Matt. that our blessed Lord reproved certain of his hearers for their blindness to what he was pleased to designate "the signs of the times," that is, those providential indications, by which God was clearly instructing them in his will. That their blindness was wilful, appeared from the fact, that they could "discern the face of the sky,"—they could judge correctly concerning the weather, and thus were enabled to provide for its continuance or change. There was, therefore, no want of sense or shrewdness to discover the mind of God from his providential indications of it; hence, their ignorance of the "signs of the times" was voluntary and criminal. For one class of facts they had eyes to see; but against the other they pertinaciously closed their eyes.

From the foregoing reproof of our Lord, I would deduce this general and important, though I fear much neglected truth,—*the revolutions of providence are continually unfolding the written word, and throwing fresh light on its pages.* Hence, what a good man would engage in with a clear conscience, at one period of the world, he might, at a subsequent period, feel himself bound most scrupulously to avoid; and that which, in one age, could be honestly and safely left undone, might in another, become a matter that we would not dare neglect. The written word has, indeed, in the meanwhile remained unchanged; but the events of providence have given a broader and a clearer illumination to its letter, and thus developed larger views of sin and duty.

I might here instance the slave trade. Time was, when Christians, whose sincerity and piety of character we could not doubt, were "in all good conscience," employed in this business. But its evils have since, in the course of providence, been so plainly unfolded, that no one now doubts its nefarious wickedness. Indeed, we almost begin to question whether real Christians

ever could have been asleep on the subject of this great sin, and yet we know the fact was so.

I might also instance the cause of temperance. How contracted, and in many respects, how erroneous the views of Christians once were on this point! A very short time since, the great body of Christian men habitually—moderately indeed—yet habitually drank ardent spirits. But how few such will you find in this practice now? Indeed, God, in his providence has made it so appallingly manifest that the moderate use of distilled liquors is the cause of all the drunkenness in the land, that not only Christians, but intelligent men of the world—all the friends of good morals and their country, are every where uniting with Christians, heart and hand, to banish this root of the evil, moderate drinking, from the community. So simple and obviously correct is the fundamental principle of temperance societies, that Christians begin to be amazed that they did not see the matter in this light before. And, my friends, if I have not very much misinterpreted “the signs of the times,” the day is nigh, even at the door, when Christian duty on this point will be so universally plain, that total abstinence from ardent spirits, except as a medicine, will be one of the terms of admission into the communion of the church.

Take, then, the principle we have just laid down, and attempted to illustrate, viz:—that the revolutions of providence are continually unfolding the written word, and throwing fresh light on its pages; apply this principle to the case of Sunday Schools. Time was, when the Church of Christ, as a body, did comparatively nothing for little children, when they were almost universally suffered to grow up to a considerable age, without an effort to communicate to them religious instruction and pious habits. But has it not, in the movements of this age, become perfectly manifest that *the congregation which does not put forth endeavours to sustain a flourishing Sunday School within its own borders—that congregation incurs great guilt, and cannot expect the blessings of heaven to rest upon it.* Christians do not now, therefore, require a particular precept enjoining this duty, because they see it every where, within the Bible and without, traced in characters of light by the finger of Providence.

But, my hearers, I am well aware that there are very few, among professing Christians, or even the worldly, who do not acknowledge the excellence of Sunday Schools, and the duty of engaging in them; which duty, however, they very generally attempt to put off on the young. Let us, therefore, now notice this excuse.

2. Older, and especially married persons, can rarely be required to take a part in Sunday Schools; *it is almost exclusively the duty of the young.*

This persuasion is very generally entertained, and is keeping back multitudes from the labour of Sunday Schools, to the great detriment of these institutions. And from the fact of its being so quietly and extensively rested in, one would suppose that the reasons were very many, and very strong in support of it. But wherever the objection is brought forward, and we attempt to discover the grounds on which it is maintained, either no arguments are alleged, or such as prove that it is a mere excuse to avoid the performance of duty.

Are older and married people under less obligations to do good than the young? Can it reasonably be expected that the former should feel less interest in the good morals and welfare of the community, than the latter? Does an increase in years, and especially an entrance into the marriage relation, diminish a person's capacity to govern children well, and to communicate to them useful knowledge? If either of the questions could be answered in the affirmative, it would, perhaps, be a solid argument for confining the

work of Sunday School instruction, in a great measure, to the young; but if indeed, the attainment of mature years, and the formation of the marriage tie, do increase our obligations to be usefully employed; if the older and the married ought to feel a deeper interest in the good morals and welfare of the community; and if we have a right to expect in such persons, a greater ability to manage and instruct children,—then the duties of the Sunday School are peculiarly theirs; and younger people, so far from being put in the principal charge of these institutions, ought to act in them a subordinate part to their elders.

3. Another objection frequently heard is this, "*I am so worn out with the labours and anxieties of my six days' avocation, that I have neither heart nor strength for the duties of the Sunday School.*"

This plea is sometimes brought forward by young persons, but most commonly it is heard from the older, and those who have families. We may easily meet it, however, with the fact, that many, perhaps most, now engaged in the labour of Sunday Schools are, also, remarkable for their diligence in their wordly callings, but they find the duties of the one, by no means to interfere with, or disqualify them for the duties of the other. Is it not to be feared, therefore, that this objection proceeds, in most instances, from mere slothfulness, or a secret indifference to the Sunday School cause?

There are cases, indeed, in which, I doubt not, the excuse is well founded—so harrassed and broken down are these persons by their exertions and cares for the things of this life, that they are utterly unfit for any effort on the Lord's day. But would it not be well for such individuals to ask their own consciences, whether it be consistent with the law of God to be so anxiously engaged for the world, as to incapacitate themselves for doing good on the Sabbath? I strongly suspect that were the history of those who thus excuse themselves, to be searched into, it would be found, in most instances, that their toils and solicitude to get rich, brought very little profit in the end. One instance I recollect, of a professor of religion, who assigned this reason as an excuse for neglecting his duties as a Sunday School teacher—and mark the result,—this man of care and bustle, this greedy worshipper of Mammon, by the end of a year, was a bankrupt, stript of every cent he had in the world, and not a little in debt beside.

4. "*I cannot get to school in time,*"—is an excuse not unfrequently assigned, especially by those who have families.

Now, let it be considered that Sunday Schools very seldom commence their exercises before 9 o'clock,—and where is the man who would not be ashamed to be seen habitually opening his store or his workshop at 9 o'clock? And what sort of excuse for his laziness would it be, to say that he had a family? Let people only feel, therefore, the same sincere desire to do good, that is generally manifested to secure a worldly portion, and the plea would no more be heard—"I cannot get to school in time." The blacksmith seldom fails to get to his anvil in time, or the merchant to his counting house, or the shop-keeper behind his counter: why then should the Sunday School, and I may add, the church, be the only places to which we cannot get in time? I fear this excuse will seldom stand a moment's examination.

5. There are not a few who give it as a reason for not engaging in the labour of Sunday Schools, that—"they have a family of children—perhaps a large family."

But to such persons we would say, if you have many children, some of them must be over five or six years of age: now, why not do your duty towards these, and, at the same time, free yourselves from the obstacles, which it seems they interpose between you and Sunday School labours, by sending them to the school, or rather, by going yourselves, and taking them with you? Where, indeed, there are smaller children, and especially an infant, the mo-

ther cannot be expected to take a part in the Sunday School; she must stay at home to take care of her little ones. But this excuse will seldom serve for the father. Would it not be a blessing to them, and a real relief to their mother, and consequently doing his duty, were the father, every Lord's day, to take with him to the Sunday School, all his children who were able to go, they as scholars, and he as a teacher?

6. "*I have not got the peculiar talent of a Sunday School teacher,*" is an excuse very commonly made.

It is painfully manifest that this is too often a mere pretext to cover an indisposition to engage in Sunday School labours, which the individual is unwilling to avow, and of which, perhaps, he is not fully sensible himself. But where it proceeds from exaggerated views of the ability necessary to constitute an useful teacher, and a conscientious diffidence,—we would reply, that the same amount of knowledge, good sense, and right feeling required in most of the ordinary pursuits of life, is all that is essential to make a *beginning* in the Sunday School. No judicious superintendent would think of putting a *raw* hand in charge of an advanced class. There is always some place in the school, in which you may be usefully employed; and be assured a moderate share of attention and industry will gradually qualify you for a more arduous sphere. Without this training, the most talented could do but little in the Sunday School: with it, almost any one, however slender his abilities, may become quite a respectable teacher.

7. "*I would willingly take a class,*" some reply, when urged to this duty, "*but there is none for me; the school is already well supplied with teachers.*"

The path of duty, in such cases, may easily be made plain to those who really wish to walk in it. And to such we would say, does your school embrace all the children dwelling within a convenient distance to attend upon it? or rather, is it not the melancholy fact, that there are great numbers not yet brought in—perhaps twice as many as your school exhibits? Now, why not go into the highways and hedges, and gather in these? I have known a teacher, in the course of a few hours' walk in the outskirts of our city, collect a school of seventy or eighty scholars.

Children not in attendance on Sunday Schools, do, with few exceptions, spend the Lord's day in idleness, or worse than idleness: many of them are seen in the streets, busied in various sports, and learning all manner of wickedness. These will very seldom, of themselves, think of coming to the school: teachers and other benevolent persons must go after them. It is in this way nearly all our schools are formed; and he who sincerely wishes a class, will seldom decline the labour of raising it. But suppose that in your case there are circumstances, which make it impossible for you to look for scholars; (a very rare case, however,) still *come to the school*:—supernumerary teachers are often wanted, and if not thus engaged, there are many other ways in which you may be usefully employed, or at least you may learn much yourself by looking on. It was not those labourers who stayed at home, but those who were found patiently waiting in the market place, that at last received an invitation from the Lord of the vineyard.

8. I will notice only one other case.

There are those who make high professions of regard for Sunday Schools, but never engage in the labours of them; and, when questioned on this subject, the proof of their regard is found to consist simply in the fact that,—*they permit their children to attend as scholars.*

Wonderful evidence of favour! Why the merest selfishness might, and, indeed, does, prompt thousands to send their children to Sunday Schools. That man must, in this respect, be blind to his own interest, who refuses to his family the benefit of Sunday School influence.

The case of these persons is calculated to remind us of those of whom our

Lord speaks, who "bound heavy burdens, and grievous to be borne, and laid them on men's shoulders, but they themselves would not move them with one of their fingers." I do not assert that such persons ought to take their children away from the Sunday School;—God forbid I should say so;—but let them give more substantial proofs of their regard: let them immediately take a part in this good work. Or, if there are any who, from their peculiar duties, or circumstances, cannot actually engage in Sunday Schools, are there not other and equally unequivocal evidences of friendly feeling which they can give? Let them contribute liberally, according to their means, to uphold Sunday Schools; let them faithfully employ their influence to support the Sunday School cause, and recommend it to the community.

The discourse closes with the following counsels to superintendents and teachers of Sunday Schools:

My friends, if the importance and honour of an office are to be estimated by its usefulness, (and what more just and reasonable criterion than this?) I know of scarcely any that can compete with yours. Surely that work to which an enlightened philanthropy, patriotism, and regard for religion have called you, must be eminently important and honourable.

The subject of your duties might very profitably occupy many discourses; I must necessarily, therefore, be exceedingly brief in what I am expected to say on this occasion. But if you will favour me with a close attention to each hint, and follow it out for yourselves, into its various consequences and practical applications, I trust you will not find the present exercise without advantage.

1. I would enjoin upon you, in the first place, my friends, always to *bear in mind the true character of a Sunday-School teacher*, which is that of an auxiliary to the gospel ministry, in the great work of training up immortal minds in the knowledge of "the truth," and thus saving them from sin and its terrible consequences here and hereafter. To be supremely influenced by any other object in your labours, is to desecrate God's sacred day. But if you ever keep this high and holy end in view, it will excite in you such a solemn feeling of your responsibility, give you such a seriousness and tenderness of manner, and impel you to such unwearied devotedness to all your duties, as must, by the divine blessing, secure to you an abundant measure of success.

2. Let me exhort you *never to be absent at the opening of the School*.

How can you expect that God will qualify you for your labours, and prepare the children for instruction, if you do not make it a matter of conscience to be always present when his blessing is prayed for? Teachers who habitually come late, are of no use,—nay, they are positively injurious to a school.

3. *Carefully conform to all the rules and regulations of your School*.

Children are, proverbially, the creatures of imitation. They will naturally look to you for an example. However excellent, therefore, may be the laws of your school, yet if you do not conduct yourself in accordance with them, it must soon become disorderly and worse than useless.

4. Make it a point of conscience to *come to school thoroughly prepared to communicate the instruction expected from you*.

It is not in human nature for even a child to respect an incompetent teacher. And there are so many excellent and cheap publications in this day designed to qualify you for your duties, that ignorance in you would be without excuse. Each one should furnish himself with James' Teacher's Guide, or Lloyd's Teacher's Manual, the Union Questions, Alexander's Bible Dictionary, Help to the Gospels, also to the Acts, Lloyd's Catechism on the Parables,

Alexander's Sacred Geography, and where it is practicable, (some) Commentary on the Holy Scriptures. An hour or two's study will ordinarily be sufficient to enable you to appear with advantage before your class.

5. I would urge upon you, brethren, the *importance of continually adding to the Library of your School.*

It is impossible for your library to remain stationary. Books will at times be lost under the most careful management, and it is impossible to prevent their wearing out. If then you take no pains to replace them, your library must come to nothing. But this is not all; you ought not to be satisfied with barely keeping up the original number of books. There are few schools in which some scholars may not be found, who have read all the books, and are impatiently waiting for others. And every teacher who has noticed the advantages of a good library to his school, and to the families of his scholars, would wish to put in their hands every suitable publication, as fast as issued. Visit the Depository, therefore, frequently, for the purpose of increasing the catalogue of your books.*

6. Let me exhort you *not to be content with merely instructing the children under your care.*

I here refer to the ordinary lessons of the School. Do not think that the duty of the day is done when these are gone through. Use every opportunity of conversing with your scholars, in a plain and affectionate manner, upon the great truths of the gospel, and the things which belong to their everlasting peace. And when, by the divine blessing, you discover that any one of them is seriously impressed, make that child the subject of special attention and prayer; and be careful to let his case be known to the minister, to whose pastoral charge he may belong. How delightful to the pious teacher to see one scholar, and another, and another, giving evidence of having been made "wise unto salvation, through faith, which is in Christ Jesus!"

7. Be sure, my friends, to *visit your scholars.*

A Sunday School is like a garden of delicate plants, which, if not constantly looked after, will be sure to go to ruin. It is not possible, under ordinary circumstances, to keep up a school, without visiting the scholars at their homes; and just in proportion as you are faithful in this duty, may you expect your school to flourish. Absentees, if not called upon, will generally soon fall off altogether, and thus the largest school will in time dwindle to nothing. Faithful visiting will not only prevent this, but greatly add to your numbers.

But, besides these salutary effects upon your school, a kindly visit from you may often prove a great blessing to the families and friends of the scholars—it may lead the careless to serious reflection, and many to the house of God, who have lived in the neglect of it.

8. I can only remark, in addition, that *the teachers of a school will find it of incalculable benefit to meet together on an evening of the week for the*

* • A good library is one of the best means of discipline in a Sunday School,—best, whether we regard the feelings of the teacher, or the benefit of the taught. Its privileges hold out a most efficacious inducement to study and good conduct. I shall never forget the day when one of my children, a boy about five years old, came home from the Sunday School, his eyes sparkling and his face clothed in smiles;—he had been permitted, for the first time, to have a book out of the library,—a privilege to which he had been looking forward with a pleasure that sweetened all his toils in pursuit of it. Had Sunday Schools accomplished nothing but the discovery of the power of a good library in exciting children to diligence and orderly conduct, the knowledge would have been cheaply purchased. And since the value of a library, in this respect, has been so clearly established, it is surprising that ordinary teachers have hitherto so generally neglected its advantages. A small well selected collection of books in each of our every day schools and academies, might, I am persuaded, save the teacher much pain and trouble, as a means of governing his scholars, and promoting their improvement.

purpose of engaging in prayer, and free conversation on the state of their school.

In this way many valuable hints can scarcely fail to be thrown out, and much practical information gained. Many evils, also, may quickly be discovered and remedied; which, if overlooked, might be productive of serious injury. Such meetings will tend likewise, with the blessing of God, to increase your interest in the school, and your confidence in each other; they will also encourage your hearts, and strengthen your hands for the good work before you. And whilst thus engaged, who knows how large a blessing heaven may pour out on the dear youth entrusted to your charge! Surely such a result you would feel a rich compensation for all your labours and sacrifices.

ANNUAL REPORTS AND MISCELLANEOUS NOTICES.

From a file of Reports before us, none of which have been noticed in the present form, we have selected such facts and suggestions as seem to us of permanent importance, and have arranged them under convenient heads for reference. The preparation of this document has cost us a great deal of labour, and we hope it will not be in vain.

THE SEVENTH ANNUAL REPORT OF THE AMERICAN SUNDAY SCHOOL UNION.

May 24, 1831.—pp. 72.

We are not about to burden our pages with large extracts from this document, and yet some notice of it seems to be necessary. It occupies ground entirely different from that occupied by any former Report, and may be considered an official declaration of the views and principles of the Society, in relation to some of the most important subjects of Sunday School interest.

The services (of which the reading of the Report before us was a part) were introduced by prayer, offered by the Rev. Mr. Perry, of the Baptist Church, in Philadelphia, a hymn was then sung, which will be found in another page of this Number; after which, Paul Beck, Jr., the Treasurer of the Society, presented and read the Annual Report of receipts and expenditures.

Less than half the Annual Report of the Board of Managers was then read, and sundry resolutions followed, accompanied with addresses from *Dr. Reese* and *Mr. L. Tappan*, of New York, and *Rev. Messrs. Cookman* and *Sanford*, of Philadelphia.

The Report states, that notwithstanding the painful indifference of Auxiliaries to their duty to present to the parent Society an annual statement of their proceedings,—

Enough is known to show, that during the last year, our schools have increased from 6,654 to 7,244; our teachers from 61,372 to 64,215; and our pupils from 411,009 to 451,075; showing an increase during the year of 590 schools, 2,843 teachers, and 40,066 scholars. The number in the United States who are enrolled as members of a Sunday School, may be safely estimated at upwards of 600,000. In Great Britain the number is 1,019,693.

Between thirty and forty new works have been published by us during the year, principally for libraries. A large proportion of these were prepared, originally, for the society. Many of our books, having received a critical revision, have passed through new editions. The character and value of this revision may be ascertained by an examination of the Shepherd of Salisbury Plain, the Catechist, Mary and Archie Graham, the Patient Pastor, &c. &c.

The Treasurer's Report shows the amount of expenditure, during the year ending March 1, 1831, to have been \$77,454 86

The amount of receipts within the same period, including the balance on hand at the commencement of the year, - \$77,701 63

Leaving a balance in the treasury, March 1, 1831, of - - 246 77

Of the receipts, there have been donations to the general fund, 8,267 83

To the Missionary fund, (including fees on admission of auxiliaries,) - - - - - 983 33

To the Valley fund, - - - - - 24,417 12

And the balance is made up of the amount in the treasury, March 1, 1830, - - - 3,115 53

And the amount received from societies and individuals in payment of debts, and books sold, 40,917 72

44,033 35

\$77,701 63

The amount paid during the last year for the salaries and expenses of Missionaries, to establish Sunday Schools east of the Alleghany, exceeds the amount of donations to that object, in the sum of \$713 59.

The society owns no property of any kind, except its stock of books and stereotype plates, and the building it occupies, on which is a mortgage of \$20,000. Nor has it any other source of income except the profits of its business, (which, for the year ending March 1, 1831, amounted to \$548 83,) and the voluntary contributions of its friends; on the contrary, besides its business debts and mortgage, it owes *thirty-six thousand one hundred and fifty dollars*, borrowed money, on which we pay interest.

Among the important measures adopted since the last anniversary, is the commencement of a weekly paper, with the title of "Sunday School Journal, and Advocate of Christian Education." This subject has been before the Board for years, but it seemed to be embarrassed with many difficulties, and the step was postponed until public sentiment became very generally and decidedly favourable to it, and the interests of the Society obviously required it. Indeed, it would be strange, if, in the multitude of claims which are urged upon common attention, every hour, by the periodical press, the cause of Christian education should be without a special advocate. It would be strange, if, in the unnumbered theories and fancies on the subject of reform, we should lose sight of that most wise and substantial plan, which is capable of universal application; of which God himself is the author and promoter, and the success of which is, by Him, made sure. If the advocate of kindred associations, to advance our agricultural and commercial interests, is heard, it is not to be supposed that a deaf ear will be turned to the advocate of a plan which secures the universal diffusion of knowledge, and, by the same means, the purity, intelligence, and independence of the whole people.

It is in the full confidence that our fellow-citizens are disposed to sustain the system of Sunday School instruction, so far as it is understood, and that all are willing to investigate its claims, that we have adopted a measure which has no precedent in this, or any other country.

That we did not mistake public feeling, is already apparent. There is not a State in the Union from which we have not received abundant proof that our Journal is regarded with deep interest, and considered a highly expedient and seasonable publication. That it is the cheapest agent the Society has ever employed, is very clear; and it has this farther advantage over all other agents, that its services may be secured at the same time, by every body, and for an unlimited period. In exchange for the trifling annual sum of two or three dollars, by each school, a weekly visit may be received from this agent, with intelligence from every part of the country; and such intelligence, too, as must give a new impulse to the labourers, at every stage of their progress. And it is by some such cheap and simple medium of communication between the carpenter and the goldsmith, and between him that smootheth with the hammer and him that smiteth on the anvil, that every one is to help his neighbour, and every one is to say to his brother, "Be of good courage."

The two periodicals for children, continue to receive the approbation of those among whom they circulate. The *Youth's Friend*, it is believed, will not suffer in comparison with any juvenile periodical now published. It is very pure, sensible, instructive, and entertaining, and some of the best models of writing for children may be found in its pages.

The estimated number connected with the Schools, who have made a profession of religion, during the year, is over 4,000. The number actually reported by less than half the Auxiliaries is not less than 2,000, and these are often stated to be but partial returns.

The Report then enters minutely into the principles by which the Society is governed in the preparation of books. A single extract on this subject must suffice. After describing the character of the books which might be expected from such a source,

To furnish reading of this character for the juvenile population of the country, or for such portion of it as waits upon us for a supply, is a duty of no ordinary magnitude and delicacy. It was obviously impracticable to have at hand, at once, the requisite variety of books, or to adapt them with very nice discrimination to the unknown, and, as yet, unformed tastes of those who were to be their readers. It was seen, that every thought, expression, and device, the property of which was not secured to another, must be made subservient to this great object. Accordingly, at the very outset, the principle was distinctly avowed, and published in many hundred thousand forms, that the phrase "*Revised by the Committee of Publication*," implies, that the book so revised has undergone every alteration which was considered necessary by that committee, to render it a fit reading book for American Sunday School children, of every denomination; in other words, the book so revised is *adopted* by the American Sunday School Union; and whatever patronymic, or reputation, it may bear at the time of its adoption, or obtain afterwards,—for its appearance, dress, character and influence, the American Sunday School Union is alone responsible.

This right of revision is enjoyed, to its fullest extent, by all others, without molestation and complaint, and there seems to be no good reason why it should be denied to those whose only object in exercising it, is public advantage.

And as to the principle on which the right is founded,—we cannot bring ourselves to believe, that a book which is unexceptionable, save in a single line, or in a single class of words, is to be for ever excluded from circulation,

or circulated only among the few whose views and prejudices it favours, merely because of the objectionable passage or phraseology.

The declaration which the title page of each of our publications makes, shifts the burden of responsibility for every line and letter upon the Society, whether the name of the original author is retained, or expunged. And while we regard, scrupulously, the rights of authors, and the provisions of law by which they are secured from violation, we esteem every book which is given to the world, without this protection, as common property, and claim the liberty to use it in whatever way it will best subserve the purposes of religious education.

In what form, as to size, style, price, and general character, they will best subserve these purposes, has, particularly within the last year, become a subject of very general and interesting inquiry.

The Valley Enterprise, (as it is popularly called,) occupies a conspicuous place in the Report of the year's transactions. From this it appears that

The amount contributed to the Valley Fund to March 1, 1831, is	\$24,417 12
The amount paid and contracted to be paid for Missionaries, Agents, and incidental expenses, on the same account, to the same time,	20,606 49
The amount of books placed in the Valley for the supply of libraries, previous to March, 1831,	18,329 59
	<hr/>
	\$38,936 08

Showing that the Society has been obliged to advance - - \$14,518 96 in the prosecution of the enterprise, over and above all that has been received for that object. For the reimbursement of much of this we can only rely on pledges not yet redeemed, and a considerable part of which may be considered of uncertain value. A thousand circumstances may change the purpose, or the power of fulfilling engagements of this kind; and it would be entirely unsafe for the Society to assume extensive pecuniary responsibilities upon such a contingency. We can, prudently, go no further than actual available means will carry us. And, notwithstanding the unexampled nominal generosity which has been exhibited, the plan may be defeated through a deficiency of such actual means. Present indications are very favourable to the seasonable accomplishment of the Society's undertaking; and, in many parts of the western world, there has been a most remarkable preparation in the public mind for the establishment of schools as soon as they were proposed.

The plan of accomplishing the grand purpose of the Society respecting the Valley, is then concisely stated, and the Report closes with such general considerations as the occasion naturally suggested.

This document is stereotyped, and will be furnished gratuitously to those who will engage to read or distribute it.

It is particularly desirable that the principles which the Report advances should be examined, and if sound and practicable, that they should be universally inculcated. They certainly are not the principles on which public or private education

is now based—whether they shall become such, depends on the course of public sentiment, and this is directed and governed by the intelligence and virtue of a few individuals.

THE SECOND ANNUAL REPORT OF THE BOSTON BAPTIST SABBATH SCHOOL UNION.

March 10, 1831.

This is quite a sensible and interesting Report of several flourishing Schools connected with the Baptist Church in Boston.

The Union embraces 13 schools, 203 teachers, and 1,697 pupils. Of the teachers, 152 are professors of religion. The average attendance of the pupils is 1,005. There is a nett increase of 2 teachers, and 324 scholars, during the year, and a greater readiness is discovered by persons of mature years to engage as teachers.

Some interesting statistical notices are given, among which are the following: In the male department of the First Baptist Sabbath School, the average age of teachers is 23, the oldest is 41, and the youngest 17. In the female department, the average age is 24, the eldest being 40, and the youngest 16.

In the South Boston School,

The ages of our teachers are as follows, viz: 4 between 15 and 20; 8 between 20 and 25; 4 between 25 and 30; 5 between 35 and 40, and 1 between 45 and 50.

Length of time in which the teachers have been employed in the school—one, 11 years; four, 10 years; two, 5 years; three, 4 years; two, 1 year; six, less than a year. The oldest scholars about 12, the youngest 3 years; the principal part between the ages of 7 and 14. The classes usually consist of 7.

One of the pupils of the Milton Street School died on the twenty-fourth of January last, aged eight years. She was of an uncommonly amiable disposition, forgiving, and kind to her brothers and sisters, and to all others with whom she was conversant, always manifesting an uncommon attachment to those who took an interest in her welfare. This she manifested in a particular manner to her Sabbath School Teacher. She had been connected with this school one year previous to the commencement of her sickness, during which time she was absent but a very few Sabbaths. For a few days in the first part of her sickness, religion seemed to be the principal subject which occupied her mind; soon after this, her mind became somewhat deranged, (owing to the disorder in her head,) which continued during the remainder of her sickness. At length the hour arrived for her to depart and be with Christ; she has gone, we trust, to dwell with those who have 'washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.'

We deem it important, [says the Report of this School,] when scholars remove from one part of the city to another, that measures should be taken to secure their connexion with other schools; this has, in many instances, been too much neglected. The youngest scholars are about 5 years of age, and

the eldest about 16; the great majority of them are between the ages of 8 and 12. They are not transferred from one class to another, except on some special occasion, when thought advisable by the Superintendent.

The Report of the male department of the Federal Street School has the following suggestion:—

We have also stricken from our list, the names of such scholars as come very irregularly, and have entered them on a list of irregular scholars; as we have adopted a plan of keeping two lists, one being for such scholars as are, for the most part, regular in their attendance, and the other, as stated, for those upon whose general attendance we cannot depend. It is our object, by this means to know more definitely who are the absentees, that we may direct our *particular* attention in our visits to them; and also to *know who are, in fact*, our scholars. At regular intervals it doubtless will be found proper to shift names from one list to another, as scholars decline or improve in their regularity.

And on the subject of the Library, they report the following plan:—

We have printed catalogues of the books, one copy of which each scholar is allowed to preserve for his own use, and select by it the book he may want, taking his own time for that purpose at home. Every second Sabbath, the books are given out, and "every good and punctual scholar" is entitled to one, provided he has made return of the volume previously received. The books are taken back in the morning, and given out in the afternoon of the same Sabbath. In the morning, each scholar shows his teacher, by the catalogue, what book he would like to take; and, as that particular book may not be in, he selects three or four others, either of which will suit him, and the numbers set against them on the catalogue are taken down on a slip by the teacher, in so many parallel lines as there are scholars in the class to receive books, which slip is handed to the Librarian as soon as prepared, and before the morning school is closed. The Librarian will be at the school-room in the afternoon before the rest, and prepare the parcel for each class, in season to be distributed as the slips direct, as soon as the school has been opened. The Librarian opens an account with each teacher, and each teacher with his scholars. If any scholar in the afternoon is dissatisfied with the book he has taken, he may, with the consent of the teacher, exchange it with any scholar of his class, so disposed; but no book can go back to the Librarian for exchange; or if returned, the scholar must wait for another until the next regular time for giving out books. Our catalogue contains two parts; one consists of such books as are adapted to the capacities of the smaller scholars, from which alone they may select, unless their parents should send for some particular book for their own reading. The older scholars can have the range of the whole library.

In one School, a record of the attendance of teachers is kept, and the absent or late are *fin*ed.

On the subject of an increase of teachers, a hint is given of general application:

Should any persons be induced to offer their services, and, on inquiry, find that the number of teachers in the schools is in fair proportion to the present number of scholars, we would remind them, that any person may, by *one day's* visit among the poor, find a half dozen scholars to form a *new* class.

Let half a dozen persons agree to form a new school, and select a suitable person as Superintendent, and obtain a room; the scholars will soon be found, and that without removing one from another school. In any large city, schools might be multiplied in this manner, were the disposition to engage in such objects excited, and the requisite zeal and perseverance employed to conquer difficulties.

The character of a Superintendent is regarded as of primary importance.

It is a great object to have a man of superior qualifications as presiding officer in each Sabbath school. To piety should be added knowledge, zeal, activity, patience, and aptness to teach. It is not necessary that he should be a strictly learned man, but it is required that he be studious—and that his heart be in his work; and it is highly desirable that he should find time between Sabbaths to meet his teachers or scholars, and attend to every thing connected with the prosperity of his school. A school which first secures the right man for Superintendent, will meet with less difficulty in obtaining teachers; for a good leader, and a well ordered school, are inducements to engage.

The Report speaks of the last (sixth) Annual Report of the American Sunday School Union as

A document which every religious man and woman, as well as Sabbath School Teacher, should most attentively read.

If any one is disposed to read it on the recommendation of our Baptist friends, they can be supplied, gratuitously, by calling or sending to 146 Chesnut Street, Philadelphia.

FIFTEENTH ANNUAL REPORT OF THE RICHMOND AND MANCHESTER (VA.) SUNDAY SCHOOL UNION. April 6, 1831.

Valley of the Mississippi.—The great and splendid enterprise undertaken by the American Sunday School Union, of carrying the blessings of their system to every destitute neighbourhood in the great Valley of the Mississippi, the decisive measures taken to that end, and the public favour it has elicited, form a new era in the history of the Parent Society; and will, in the accomplishment, give happy and decisive evidence that the capabilities of the institution are commensurate with the rapidly increasing population of the West, and the almost equally rapid extension of the system in other parts of our country.

Juvenile Benevolence.—School No. 3. attached to the Presbyterian Church, on Shockœ-hill, numbers on register 118—with 7 officers, 10 male and 12 female teachers. Average attendance of scholars in March, 99. It has a Library of about 300 volumes, chiefly of the publications of the American Sunday School Union, which are read with much interest. There are two benevolent societies in this School: the "Juvenile," which contributed this year \$26 66, and the "Teacher's," which contributed \$34 44, most of which has been divided among various religious charities, including \$20 for the extra effort of the Parent Society, in the *Valley of the Mississippi*; and the Superintendent observes, "although this sum be small, should each of the 6,654 schools belonging to the Union, contribute the same amount, it would make \$133,080, a sum adequate to the accomplishment of this great undertaking."

Five teachers are counted as the fruits of Gospel grace in this School last

year, and for the last six months, the teachers have held a weekly prayer meeting, preparatory to their lessons, and to invoke the blessing of God upon their labours, in making effectual his *own truth*, in the conversion of the children—*now—even now*.

Great success.—*School No. 6.* was commenced about a year ago, on the Basin, in the midst of a population most needing all the salutary influence that could be brought to bear upon it. This School has been ably and faithfully supported by its Superintendent and teachers, and their labours have been crowned with much success. It was commenced with about 50 scholars, and now 130 are reported on register, with 4 officers, 8 male and 11 female teachers. The average attendance of children, last month, was 102; 86 children are reported to have gone from this to other schools, or removed, in the course of the year. When we consider that this school is on ground before almost uncultivated, and that its action is chiefly on a population before little benefited by Sunday Schools, too much importance cannot be attached to its progress and success. Among the learners are a number of adults; and some of them married women. In this school has been seen an aged female devoting herself to the laborious occupation of teaching, and in her class a grandmother aged 67, and her daughter the mother of children, one of whom is also a learner, and one an infant in her lap. Seven teachers and five scholars are numbered as the hopeful subjects of converting grace, among whom is the aged learner above-mentioned, and her daughter.

Obvious Advantages.—A new and interesting auxiliary is presented in the *Tuckahoe School*, situated two miles from Powell's Tavern, in Goochland County. It was commenced in June, 1830, and now contains 33 learners, embracing, it is believed, all the children in the neighbourhood, of which 29 are usually present. The quiet, orderly behaviour, and correct deportment of the children are truly exemplary, and the progress made by many of them almost incredible. As an evidence, it may be stated, that nearly all of those who commenced with their alphabet have learned to read. The library contains 148 volumes, which are read with increasing interest. This school is said to have originated in the active zeal of a pious female. Much inconvenience has been felt from want of a good school-house, and measures are now in train to provide for the erection of a building, which shall also be appropriated to public worship.

Congregations established.—In two instances of our new auxiliaries, it appears that Sabbath schools formed by a few individuals are promotive of the establishment of regular public worship—so far contrary to common experience that it requires the fostering care of settled congregations to form and support Sunday Schools.

From the statements already given, it will be found that the aggregate of the Schools of the Union within the bounds of the City and Manchester, is 647 scholars on register, with 25 officers, 49 male and 52 female teachers—average attendance of learners 524.

When it is considered that there are six other Sunday schools attached to other churches of this City, and not united with us, and that these schools are understood to be, generally, in a flourishing state, it will be a moderate estimate to consider 1,200 scholars as comprised in all the Sunday Schools of the City, and these from a white population of about 8,000, will show, probably, as large a proportion of Sunday School children as can be found in any city of the Union. Our most cheering consideration is to be found in the sentiment evidently prevailing among the teachers, that they must aim more immediately at the religious instruction, the spiritual good of their scholars, and with prayerful expectation strive to bring them to the Saviour without delay.

TWELFTH ANNUAL REPORT OF THE ALBANY (N. Y.) COUNTY SABBATH SCHOOL UNION.

Revival of Interest.—It was seen from our last semi-annual reports that our schools had declined in numbers and interest. But measures were immediately taken to ascertain the cause. Every school was visited by a committee of teachers, and a new stimulus was again given. It was evident that good was produced by this measure, from the increased attendance at our next concert for prayer, and the feeling which was called out at that meeting. From the reports, so far as they have been received, there appear to be 1,740 schools, and 288 teachers; of this number, 216 teachers are professors of religion, 40 have united themselves to the church during the past year; 9 scholars have also made a profession of religion in the same time. Although the number of teachers and scholars who have professed religion during the last year, falls short of the number reported the year previous, yet we would desire to express our grateful sense of these favours from the hands of our gracious Redeemer. We feel well assured that quite a number of scholars who have not publicly professed their attachment to the cause of Christ, give pleasing evidence of the power of renewing grace; and are gratified on learning that almost every school connected with the Union is supplied with a library.

Who should be Teachers.—We trust that the idea that Sabbath school teaching is a business of secondary importance will soon be superseded by a conviction of its true character and important claims. We feel that it is well worthy of the attention of our older and more experienced members of the church; if there is a cause that needs experience it is this, and we feel that quite too few of the middle aged and elderly of our churches are among our teachers. We have seen the happy results arising from Bible classes taught by experienced lay Christians—and where these classes can be taught in the houses of the teachers we think it would be preferable.

Interesting facts.—One of our schools reports that two of their teachers are in a course of preparation for the ministry, and in another two teachers and one scholar are in the same course of study. Two of these in the judgment of charity have experienced religion in the Sabbath schools. In visiting a scholar of one of the schools, says a teacher, I inquired of his mother how her son conducted at home since he attended the Sabbath school; she replied, that a great change was perceptible in his conduct; that before he went to Sabbath School he was in all sorts of wickedness on the Sabbath, but since he had been to school he was a changed boy. On further inquiries we found that he not only gave good evidence of a change of heart, but had united himself with the church.

Another teacher remarks, (whose praise is in all the schools where she is known,) that 5 of her class profess to have found an interest in Christ during the past six months, 2 of them have made a profession of their Faith. "I have reason to believe that, in some instances, the Sabbath School influence has extended to parents of the children. Two little girls, who are sisters, in the same class, having, within a short time of each other, become the subject of renewing grace, and by their prayers and example have been the means of reviving an almost expiring hope in one of the parents, and the hopeful conversion of the other, who was a great opposer of religion, and particularly opposed his wife and children in making a profession of religion." These are evidences that the spirit of the Lord is in the families of most of the children in the class. In conclusion, we would call upon all who love the cause of Christ, to pray for the prosperity of our schools, that the spirit of the Lord may be poured out upon us, that we may rejoice together that we are not labouring in vain.

From the Annual Report of the Portsmouth, Virginia, Sunday School, auxiliary to the Sunday School Union of the Methodist Episcopal Church, we extract the following seasonable suggestion on the importance of *parental co-operation* :

"Without the cordial and persevering co-operation of parents, guardians, and masters, the children cannot advance as rapidly as is desirable. The influence of parental and other legal authority has always formed an important item in the means of success with all teachers of youth. But more especially is such influence and co-operation needed by such teachers as propose to direct children to love and obey their parents—to observe the Sabbath day and keep it holy, and to contemplate those great moral and religious truths, without a knowledge and love of which there is no peace to parents or children, and no permanent safety to the state."

CRAWFORD COUNTY (PA.) SABBATH SCHOOL UNION.

The Managers of this Union held a meeting some months since, at Readville, and passed the following resolution :

Resolved, That the Managers of the Crawford County Sabbath School Union be respectfully requested to prepare for publication an address to our citizens, asking their cordial co-operation in the establishment of a Sabbath School and Library in each of the townships in our County, and that the said Managers adopt such measures as in their wisdom they shall think expedient to carry into effect so salutary a plan.

From the address, prepared in compliance with the resolution of the Board, we extract the following paragraphs :

At the sixth anniversary meeting of the American Sunday School Union, held in Philadelphia, last May, this Society, distinguished by the number of its members, residing in every part of the United States, and inferior to none in piety, talents, and zeal in every good work, deeply impressed with the solemn importance of extending, in the fullest manner, the blessings of Sabbath School instruction to the vast regions of the West, adopted the following resolution, viz : "*That the American Sunday School Union, in reliance upon divine aid, will, within two years, establish a Sunday School in every destitute place, where it is practicable, throughout the Valley of the Mississippi.*" No resolution was ever received with greater interest and applause than this, which contemplates so much for the spiritual welfare of four millions, who are spread over a portion of country, which, before our children shall sleep in the dust, will controul and direct the counsels of our nation. The Society must have been influenced by wisdom from above to have adopted such a sublime measure, and so appositely calculated to prepare the rising generation for the conspicuous part they are destined to perform. That this Society is as eager to act, as to resolve, we may only state that through its exertions more than \$50,000 have already been gratuitously raised to aid in carrying their benevolent purpose into speedy and ample effect. A multitude of their agents are on the field, and are ardently and successfully engaged in the glorious undertaking.

The county of Crawford is within the Valley of the Mississippi, as this appellation is appropriate to all that portion of the United States which extends from the Alleghany mountain, on the east, to the Rocky mountain, of the west—and from our inland seas, the great lakes of the north, to the Gulf of Mexico, on the south.

It is true, that more than sixty Sabbath Schools have been organised, in the course of the last dozen years, in situations to afford facilities for receiving their appropriate advantages to nearly every neighbourhood in the county—and, as we trust, not without a blessing to many, who are to be considered as the rising hope of church and state; yet, from various causes, many of these institutions, after a few years, and some after a few months, were seen to languish and to expire. Some Bibles, about seven hundred New Testaments, and Tracts, with small Books to a very liberal amount, through the generosity of the kind-hearted in several of our large cities, have been distributed among the learners of these Sabbath Schools, and the result has been such, not unfrequently, as to have commanded the warmest expressions of gratitude. While much knowledge of the word of God has been acquired, in numerous instances never to be lost, it is the acknowledgment of many, that evidently, by virtue of this new mode of spending a part of holy time, the Sabbath has been better observed, and the irksomeness of family government has been strikingly removed; and further, what was seldom to be found in our scattered settlements, a taste for reading has been extensively created, which every patriot and Christian will admit, should be diligently cherished, and that more ample means than have, as yet, been enjoyed, should be devised for its salutary gratification. Now, if such have been the results, notwithstanding the limited and brief existence of a large portion of these institutions, who can predict the aggregate of blessings, both temporal and spiritual, to descend, like a heavenly shower, upon the inhabitants of our country, could they be so conducted as to ensure their active, vigorous, and permanent operation?

Our experience and observation convince us, that, to secure the continuance and healthful functions of a Sabbath School, no expedient more beneficial can be adopted, than the introduction of a well-selected library in connexion with every such institution. Could each learner, at these little nurseries of Gospel science, be indulged with the use, on loan, of a useful, entertaining, and interesting book, in reward of his punctual attendance, application, diligence, and progress, from Sabbath to Sabbath, he would scarcely need any other stimulus to secure his unremitted devotedness to the object we urge, till arrived at adult age.

We are sensible, however, of the extreme difficulty, in the present circumstances of the great mass of our inhabitants, of raising a sum sufficient for procuring a library adequate to the exigencies of a competent number of Sabbath Schools; yet, we doubt not, there is such a prevalent feeling in favour of these institutions, that many, both male and female, in almost every section of this county, would be willing, if requested, as they may be able, to contribute their mite for an object fraught with advantages indefinite in variety and extent. Does any one hesitate at the practicability of establishing a Sabbath School and a library, as its appendage and coadjutor, which shall endure from generation to generation in every suitable district throughout the county of Crawford? Then, we would pronounce, and reiterate the little word *try*, which seemed to ring in the ear of Raikes, from the mouth of some invisible being, the moment he conceived the wish to benefit the young, the vicious, and the neglected of his own city. He listened to the gentle voice, made a persevering effort to *try* what could be done—the blessing ensued. At first, it was a cloud of promise, like that of the prophet, no bigger than a man's hand; but, soon, it began to increase—the heavens were overspread—and all the world is receiving its life-giving contents.

As a special encouragement to immediate and resolute effort, we have the happiness to represent, that the magnanimous operations of the American Sunday School Union are such, that, if the inhabitants of any settlement in the great valley of the Mississippi, of which we constitute a part, are unable

to raise funds for a library appropriate to the use of a Sabbath School, the following specified liberal aid will be afforded: The inhabitants of any such settlement raising five dollars, books of a choice and approved kind, to the amount of ten dollars, will be furnished, wherever a Sabbath School shall be instituted. We would here add, that from the extremely low price of the books, though but five dollars be collected, and ten dollars' worth are to be forwarded, the amount, in books to be received, will be equal to fifteen dollars, at least, reckoning their price as they are usually retailed by booksellers. To give a different view, fifty, or perhaps, sixty volumes will be thus procured for the library of every Sabbath School, whose patrons avail themselves of the privilege tendered, where *five dollars only* shall have been contributed—such is the generous offer to all the inhabitants needing such aid, throughout the Valley of the Mississippi.

As officers of the Crawford County Sunday School Union, we have thought it becoming, on our part, respectfully to stir up your minds by way of remembrance upon a subject which is prominent among the numerous measures of the present day for enlightening the minds and promoting the best interests of all.

Finally, permit us to indulge the certain hope, that, feeling a deep interest in the welfare of those who are soon to take your place on the stage of action, you will, without delay, establish a library in connexion with your Sabbath School, where such an institution exists, and that when you are without such a seminary for your offspring, you will do your part in furtherance of the sublime enterprise of the American Sunday School Union for the lasting benefit of these western regions, by organizing, forthwith, a Sabbath School for every destitute portion of the county, and, as an indispensable adjunct, that you will adopt such a plan for obtaining a library as may seem proper, in order to avail yourselves of a literary, moral, and religious treasure for the benefit of yourselves, your children, and your children's children.

The Annual Report of the Adams County (Pa.) Sunday School Union commences with just views of the importance and influence of Sunday School instruction:—

The infidel press teems with their disorganizing productions; the philanthropic efforts of the friends of religion are stigmatized as priestcraft, and as unhallowed thirst after power; and exertions are used by them, which, if diverted into a holy channel, might send forth streams which would "gladden the city of our God." But, in the midst of this moral desolation, it is cheering to the friends of the Gospel to observe, that, as its enemies increase their exertions, in the same and greater proportion do the efforts of the religious world stand forth in bold relief. Never did the holy cause of man's present good, and his future salvation, exhibit more zealous and determined advocates. The fountains of depravity are cleansing; and bold infidelity and crime are met fearlessly, front to front.

One of the most efficient means used for the overthrow of the strong holds of sin and Satan, is the present system of instruction by Sabbath Schools. At these benevolent institutions, principles are instilled into the infant mind, which all the efforts of infidelity, in maturer years, cannot affect or weaken. The great amount of moral and religious instruction received there, and disseminated throughout the community by their means, gives fair and clear hopes of a great improvement in the moral character of the rising generation; and the unexampled and cheering success hitherto experienced, ought to incite the philanthropist to continued and increased exertions in the holy cause.

It is with feelings of deep interest, and of devout gratitude to the great head of the Church, for the blessings and prosperity He has bestowed upon these attempts to advance the kingdom of the Redeemer, that the managers of the Adams County Sunday School Union make this their first Report to that benevolent Institution, which, under the blessing of Heaven, has given such an impulse and efficiency to moral and religious exertions—the American Sunday School Union.

A Depository of Sunday School Books has been established at Gettysburg within the last year, and Agents have been labouring, with considerable success, to organize new Schools. At the time the Report was made, there were 21 schools in progress—the estimated number of children receiving instruction in them was 1,300, and a library was attached to each school.

This number is far below what might be, and ought to be, enrolled in these benevolent Institutions. But the good cause is progressing—one after another is engaging in the “labour of love,” and lending their aid to further the cause of the Redeemer, by “coming to the help of the Lord against the mighty.” Greater attention is awakening to the religious education of our youth, and the salutary principles of the Gospel are disseminating through every rank and station of society; and we look forward with confident expectation to the time, when these benevolent purposes will find their accomplishment in the highly improved moral and religious character of those who are now gradually pushing the present generation of active men from the stage of existence, and one by one occupying their places. The good seed is being sown—Paul is planting—Apollos is watering—and God—our God—*will* give the increase.

The fourth Annual Report of the Baltimore Sunday School Society, (connected with the Methodist Episcopal Church,) contains some interesting facts. From the Report of one of the Schools, in its connexion, we extract the following:—

The conduct of the children, generally, has been such as to encourage us to hope that our labour will not be in vain. Indeed, we would gratefully acknowledge that we have received the *first fruits* of what we humbly hope will be an *abundant harvest*. One of our elder girls (who occasionally assists in teaching) has professed to find redemption through the blood of atonement. This has been the means of awakening the attention of the family to which she belongs to this all important subject, and four others have, consequently, been made partakers of “like precious faith.” Two of our teachers also, who, at the commencement of the quarter, were strangers to religion, have found the pearl of great price. We have also learned that one of our former scholars (who grew up among us) has been happily converted to the Lord. Our hearts have overflowed with gratitude to God and love to one another, and with one consent teachers and superintendents have declared that they have “never spent a more pleasant quarter.” Another states: “The Lord has graciously visited many of the scholars by the influences of his Holy Spirit. One of them has made a public profession of faith in Christ. She has been appointed teacher over a small class, and promises future usefulness. Several more in the school are seeking the Lord in the pardon of their sins, and one of our teachers has embraced religion in the last quarter.”

And the Report for the last quarter more than equals the two former in the testimony it bears to the utility and blessed effects of Sunday school instruction. It states: "Often we have had to mourn over the apparent carelessness of our children, when we have imparted the word of instruction. But, thank the Lord, he has, of late, been pleased to give us to see some fruit of our labour."

The Report concludes thus—

We should rejoice, it is our duty to rejoice; and we do rejoice, in the continued manifestations of God's favour and presence among us; and that he condescends to make use of us as instruments in accomplishing the good pleasure of his will. Another year of our labour, and of our success in the best of causes, has passed away. Oh that the review of the past, while it humbles us in the dust, at the feet of our Redeemer, and causes us to ascribe all the glory to God, of what has been accomplished, may stimulate us to renewed diligence, patience, and perseverance in the good work in which we are engaged! Let us look for our reward in heaven. God has not designed for us an adequate reward in this world for labours bestowed in his vineyard. Let the value of the soul be the standard by which we shall measure our devotedness in this cause; and let us submit to the privations necessarily involved in the discharge of our duty, in view of that eternal life which is promised us through our Lord Jesus Christ. As the hand of Divine providence has brought us one year nearer to the termination of our labour and toil here below, it becomes us to work while it is day; the night cometh, when no man can work. May we abide faithful in our calling, recollecting, that Jesus has said unto us, "Occupy until I come."

The seventh annual meeting of the New Hampshire Sunday School Union was held at Concord, June 2. The Report contains many interesting facts and suggestions, but is evidently made up under great embarrassment, in consequence of the deficiency of returns from Auxiliary schools.

Though we have no assurance that the number of Sabbath schools in this State has greatly increased the past year, we have the uniform testimony of the pastors of churches, that they are attended with a new interest, and with evidence of increasing usefulness. From the Delegates to the General Association, in September, 1830, we received general intelligence that Sabbath Schools were maintained in connexion with all the churches reported to that body; and most of them reckoned an increase of members the past year. What rendered the information peculiarly acceptable, was the fact that the increase was generally composed of those more than 14 years of age. These facts, communicated as it were incidentally, and without a particular statement of numbers, have been preserved and presented here, because we have found it extremely difficult, if not impossible, to obtain particular information from individual schools, or from county societies. During the year preceding our last Annual Report, several different requests for information from Superintendents and others, were published in the New Hampshire Observer. But that course being attended with little success, was abandoned, and the past year direct application to the Secretaries of county Societies, and Pastors of Churches, has been adopted as a substitute. To some, a definite list of questions has been presented; but the great majority of these applications have been unsuccessful. Several promises were received, but they remain to this time unfulfilled.

One of the Reports mentions the hopeful conversion of 18 scholars, and the pastor of the church adds—

“On one subject, my own impressions, and those of others here, have been, I hope, improved. I allude to the early conversion of children. We are directing our efforts, more than formerly, to this point, and with stronger hopes of success.”

And from another it appears, that in one Sabbath school, 30 have been hopefully born again the last year.

It is believed, also, that much the greater part of those in the town, who have expressed a hope in Christ since a revival commenced, have, heretofore, been under biblical instruction. Several cases of hopeful conversion have occurred in children between 9 and 14 years of age. At present there appears no more cause to doubt the genuineness of their hopes, than of an equal number of more advanced age.

Strafford County Union has passed the noble resolution to establish a Sabbath school in every town in the county, and is taking measures to secure the object.

Though many of our schools (says the Report) are flourishing, and are made a blessing to parents and children, unless means are adopted to awaken and engage ministers, churches and people, more effectually in this cause, many existing schools will languish and die, and all will come far short of exerting that restraining and sanctifying influence which they ought. But imperfect as our schools are, great and lasting good is accomplishing by their means. Many have received the truth in love, and will be everlasting monuments of the excellence of this institution. We have only to increase our efforts an hundred fold, and we may expect an equal increase of blessings to attend them.

The whole number of teachers and pupils belonging to the Union in New Hampshire, as stated in the Report and in the table, is *eight thousand two hundred and five*.

Among the resolutions passed at the annual meeting were the following :—

Resolved, That the favour of God which has so evidently attended Sabbath School instruction, calls on us for devout thankfulness, and more powerful exertions to extend and improve these Schools. Supported by Mr. ALPHEUS CROSBY, of Hanover, and Rev. STEPHEN MORSE, of Troy.

Resolved, That it is desirable to employ an active and skilful agent for six months, or a year, to visit every town in the State—to excite a deeper interest in Sabbath School instruction. Supported by Rev. ISAAC WILLEY, and the Secretary.

About ninety dollars were pledged for carrying the resolutions into effect.

Resolved, That our entire dependance on God should induce a general observance of the Sabbath School Concert for Prayer. Supported by Rev. Z. S. BARSTOW, of Keene.

Rev. John H. Church, of Pelham, was re-elected President, and Rev. Jacob Scales, of Henniker, Secretary of the Society.

The Report of the Huron County (Ohio) Sunday School Union furnishes much interesting information.

It is not among our least occasions of gratitude to the Giver of all good, that we live in an age in which voluntary associations take the place of legal

sanctions in the prosecution of efforts for meliorating the condition of our fellow men, and disseminating widely the means of moral and religious instruction. Among associations of this kind, none, in our estimation, deserve a higher place in our affections, or have a better claim to universal patronage, than societies organized for the purpose of sustaining and encouraging Sunday Schools.

The number of schools in connexion with the Huron County Sunday School Union, of which two are in Seneca County, is	-	-	-	21
Number of Scholars,	-	-	-	954
“ Teachers,	-	-	-	158

The whole number of children enjoying the benefits of Sunday School instruction within this county, may be safely estimated, in round numbers, at 1,000. The thought of the future good to be effected by training up these 1,000 children and youth in the knowledge of the Bible, is sufficient to encourage the coldest heart; to awaken the zeal and energy of the feeblest Christian. Within the year that now closes, as many as 25 or 30 of our scholars have cherished the hope that they have become subjects of the renewing grace of God. Sunday School instructions seem to have been the means which the Holy Spirit has blessed in bringing them to a just sense of their relations to God, and of their characters as transgressors of the Divine law, and of leading them by faith to accept of the offers of salvation through Jesus Christ.

In Fitchville and Milan the special tokens of the Divine presence have been more peculiarly manifested. In each of these places, as many as twelve or fourteen have numbered themselves with those who are looking forward to a heavenly inheritance when their earthly house of this tabernacle shall be dissolved.

Here are 1,000 children and youth under that kind of influence which, facts abounding on every hand tell us, will make them good citizens, the firm supporters of the civil as well as religious institutions of our favoured country. For it is a fact, too well established to be denied, even by the opposers of the Bible, that men who regulate their conduct by its Divine precepts, are not less firm in their patriotism than those who reject the inspired volume. If we may take facts already before the public for data, we may safely calculate, that of the 1,000 children and youth over whom our Sunday Schools are exerting their parental influence, few, if any, will so far forget the instruction of their youth as to become the subjects of crime and dissipation.

The Libraries, connected with nearly all the schools, furnish important auxiliaries in the work; the books are read with avidity both by parents and children. We cannot but advert with pleasure to the successful attempt which has been made to raise \$100, for the permanent maintenance of a depository of Sunday School books within the county. This, together with \$200 expended by the several schools to procure libraries during the year, is decisive evidence of the deep interest which this society has already acquired in the affections of the people.

Another fact worthy of notice is, that notwithstanding the numerous inconveniences to which we are subject in this new country, nearly all our schools are continued in operation through the winter. We cannot but hope the impression that Sunday Schools are a summer exercise merely, is nearly done away.

Among the valuable documents which have come to our hands within the last year is a report of an ecclesiastical body in Ohio, on the causes of the inefficiency of Sunday School instruction, and the best means of remedying the evil.

Among the causes of inefficiency, the following are mentioned, as most prominent:

1. A deficient Library.

We need not say that Sabbath Schools, on the present system, depend very much on the library for interest and excitement. And a good, fresh library is a powerful stimulus, fraught with incalculable benefit to all—children, teachers, and parents. But a library read through—worn out and never replenished, is but a miserable substitute for a good one. This is believed to be a fair picture of our libraries generally, and one of the causes of the present diminished interest in the schools.

2. A second cause may be found in imperfect modes of teaching.

The grand evil which runs through our Sunday School system, and may be traced from the nursery up to the university, and back to the dark ages, is that of learning words instead of ideas; of studying and communicating rather what is said, than what is meant. To learn and say by rote is the bane of our system. Our children pass over the words of holy writ "like the swallows over May-flowers;" their eyes see the words, and their memory, with great effort, may retain them for a short time, but the sense is a hidden mystery, with this additional calamity, that they rarely conceive the idea that there is any sense there. Now, not to say that such labour is profitless, we may safely say it is most dull and tedious. There can be no pure delight in committing naked, unmeaning words to memory. A child may do it as a task, or the most successful may be excited by ambition; but none will ever do it long for its own pleasure. It leaves all the powers of the mind, memory excepted, fast asleep; awakens no curiosity—excites no thirst for knowledge—warms not the heart with interest—gives none of the gratification of new ideas, and expanding conceptions.

A school in which there is little effort to teach ideas, and in which the pupils do not improve in learning, and in actual knowledge, must soon be a dull school, and must drag along under the sense of duty, rather than move forward with the excited glow of pleasure.

3. Connected with this, as a third cause, we may name, the imperfection of teachers.

To be "apt to teach," is certainly a rare endowment, and as excellent as rare. To have, first, knowledge, and then, the requisite skill to make the study interesting to the pupil, and to introduce the ideas actually into his mind, are the grand qualifications of a natural kind, which every teacher needs.

Any considerable deficiency in either of these must impair the usefulness of a school. But there is another qualification for a School teacher, of commanding importance. They need to realize their great, and most impressive responsibility to God, for the spiritual welfare of their pupils. It is feared that but few realize this as much as they ought. There are but few who cast their eye over their little charge from Sabbath to Sabbath, and say,—*"These are immortals, and their immortality, their happy or wretched immortality is, in a measure, entrusted to me, and may be decided by my faithfulness, prayers and labours."* A teacher who comes forth from his closet, and appears before his class with such feelings, can hardly fail to be interesting; can hardly fail, of course, to awaken interest among his pupils.

4. We will extend this topic by saying, that a fourth cause of the evils we deplore, and one of most extensive and alarming power, is the apathy of Christians.

Christians, very generally are sleeping over the interests of this precious institution: they have not accustomed themselves to look upon it as the last hope of the church, of their country, and of the world. They send their children to the school, perhaps employ a teacher, and give a few cents for

the library, and then go their way, and feel that they have discharged their duty. The painful truth is, Christians, as a body, have forsaken this institution; have either never had their interest excited in it, or have suffered that interest to dry up, and of course have restrained prayer before God. We would say this with emphasis, and we cannot express half we feel. Christians, we fear, are ruining our Sabbath Schools, by withholding their interest, their influence, and their prayers. The Sabbath School is the child of the Church, and its nutriment is her prayers and sympathies; our church is leaving her child to a death of abandonment and starvation.

5. A fifth cause, closely connected with this, lies in the apathy and inactivity of ministers.

While we speak thus freely respecting others, we should wrong both justice and truth, if we were to spare ourselves. It is a truth, which we would take home with shame to our own bosoms, that as ministers, we have not felt and prayed, and laboured in the cause of Sunday Schools, as their importance and our responsibilities demand. There are some, we say it with pain and shame, who carry with them their Master's direction, "Feed my Lambs," and who have solemnly sworn at the altar, that they would follow these directions, who yet cannot be brought into a Sabbath School without great effort; who go and preach to a people on the Sabbath, but as for the Sabbath School, they "pass by on the other side." Such ministers—we have no personalities, but such conduct among ministers, is enough to sink all our Sunday Schools into the grave. The church will look to her ministers to give the impulse in every holy enterprise, and she cannot be expected to drag forward a reluctant ministry, in this or any other cause of benevolence; a reluctant ministry will rather drag her down to their common sepulchre.

6. Another cause of the inefficiency of our Schools, resulting from the preceding, remains to be named: it is a destitution of Divine influence.

We fear it has hardly been believed, certainly it has not been duly realized, that no Sunday School can flourish without the blessings of the Holy Spirit.

And we find one source of this feeling, or rather of this unbelief, this disregard of the Spirit's influence, in the very defective views entertained of the great object, and the mighty influence of Sabbath Schools.

Christians as a body, have not yet fully believed, that the youth of our schools are capable of being impressed with truth, and converted to God. They seem never to have thought this period of life is, of all others, the best for religious impression, the most favourable for real conversion. Of course they have felt little need of Divine influence; of course have prayed for it very little; of course they have not enjoyed it; and of course our schools have been devoid of deep interest, and growing animation, and extensive good.

The following remedies are then suggested:

1. As respects books for reading, we need not say, that a remedy for a poor library is to make it a good one. It is believed that the requisite books are to be had, and that the means of procuring them is within the power of the community; and surely no man's money is better devoted than to this object.

2. As one remedy for the evils of an imperfect system of instruction, we are prepared to recommend most decidedly the adoption of the *Union Questions*.

We are sure that no pupils can study so successfully, and with so much interest without them, as with them, and we believe they will afford equal benefit to the teacher. Their direct tendency is to break up the inveterate habit of studying *by rote*, and to form the habit of prying into the *meaning*

—the *ideas* contained in the passage. They are adapted far beyond any system we have ever seen, to direct the investigations of the pupil, and make them pleasant, easy, and thoroughly practised. And it is believed that they will not only atone for the deficiencies of incompetent teachers, but will also afford the best assistance to those who are competent. With a book of Questions during the week, both teachers and pupils may come prepared for a profitable and pleasant examination of the lesson on the Sabbath.

We therefore trust that no pains will be spared to place at least one of those little books in every family connected with the Sunday School throughout this Presbytery.

We take the liberty to recommend also, that a certain portion of the time be allotted to *reviews*; and we think that one Sabbath in four or five would not be too frequent. Then let the children be seated together, and let the superintendent or minister, examine them on the past lessons; or let the teachers do it in their respective classes. The benefits of such a course would be that scholars would study under more responsibility; would of course study more thoroughly; would retain much more, and a longer time; while the examination, if conducted by the superintendent or minister, would afford them opportunity to come before the school, excite their interest to do them good, and acquaint themselves with their proficiency. But the benefit to the scholar is the main thing, and this is very great. The mental habit of learning a thing to retain it, compared with the habit of learning a thing to forget it to-morrow, is of priceless value. Besides, the amount of knowledge actually retained on the system of reviewing, will be much greater than on the present system. There is reason to believe that scholars generally retain but very little that they recite, beyond the hour of recitation. If so, it is surely of consequence that they have increased excitement to study and learn more thoroughly. The greatest scholars of our day have but one grand rule of study—review, review, and still review. And those only who have had experience, know how to appreciate the importance of this rule.

3. To remedy the imperfection of teachers, we can only recommend that “wisdom which is profitable to direct” in the selection, and then let the teachers strive to prepare themselves for their mighty work. Let them feel that it is a great work, and demands their highest, noblest energies. Let them labour to understand the lesson thoroughly themselves, and for this purpose let them use such helps as can be obtained. In addition to commentaries, we recommend Nevin’s *Biblical Antiquities*, and especially Alexander’s *Dictionary of the Bible*, (both published by the American Sunday School Union.) Let teachers also associate together in the Sunday School Monthly Concert, when it is practicable, that they may aid and encourage each other, but most of all, that they may unite their prayers for the blessing of Heaven upon their mutual labours.

But if this cannot be attended, or if it can, we would say to every teacher—make your responsibility a subject of serious meditation, and fix your mind upon it till you feel its weight, and then go with all your burdens, to the Lord, in prayer. Nothing short of this can give our Sunday Schools that efficiency which is so much to be desired.

4. We cannot forbear to extend our views to the whole body of Christians, and say, We must plead with you to remember the Sabbath School in your approaches to the throne of grace. To the church we would say—The Sunday School looks to you for sympathy, and interest, and prayer; its little sons and daughters lift their imploring hands to you and cry—*Pray for us*. And *can* you turn away from the spectacle, and harden your hearts against it? Shall these youth live and die in stupidity, and shall the means used to save them only ensure and enhance their destruction, while your sympathies are frozen, and your prayers withheld? Will you suffer this mighty engine,

the Sunday School, to become powerless through your indifference? Can you tell us what else will save the church, and save the nation, if you let go the salvation we hope for from the Sunday School? To us it is clear as the beams of noon, that nothing short of a most thorough awaking and arousing on the part of the church generally, can give the Sunday School its designed efficiency. Nothing less can save it from dragging itself to death, and pining away in all the lingering horrors and gaspings of starvation.

We must not forget the appeal which this subject brings to every minister, to wake up his energies, and double his diligence, and consecrate all his influence, with God and with men, to promote its cause. Let no minister, when he comes near a Sunday School, "pass by on the other side." Let none forget the duty of their commission—"Feed my Lambs." In fine, let all ministers and Christians combine their efforts, and exert their mightiest energies in this great cause, and something will be done.

If Christians would do this, if ministers would do it, the shock would be electric. There is a moral power in the church and in the ministry; when they raise their hands to heaven and bring down Omnipotence to aid them—then they have a moral power invincible and irresistible. Let this power be sacredly devoted to Christ in the cause of Sunday Schools, and the result would send new joy through heaven. We would fain indulge the hope that ere long this result will be realised.

After hearing the Report, the following resolutions were passed:

1. *Resolved*, That we recommend the universal adoption of the Union Questions into our system of Sunday School instruction.

2. *Resolved*, That we also recommend the observance of the Sunday School Teachers' Monthly Concert for Prayer, the second Monday of each month.

3. *Resolved*, That we deem it of the utmost importance that all Christians should awake to deeper sympathy for the Sunday School; and more fervent prayer for the Holy Spirit, that all our children may be taught of the Lord, and may become subjects of early piety.

4. *Resolved*, That as Ministers of Christ, we will endeavour to obey the summons that calls us to increased faithfulness, and more devoted labour in the Sunday School.

ART. VI.—MISSIONS OF THE MORAVIANS among the North American Indians, inhabiting the middle states of the Union, pp. 162, 18mo. [With four illustrative cuts, three of which are from original drawings, designed for this work.] American Sunday School Union, 1831.

The little work, whose title we have placed at the head of this article, is one of a class of publications designed by the American Sunday School Union to illustrate, by example, the genuine nature of the Christian Religion. For this purpose, it is contemplated to bring to the notice of the youth of our country, a succession of publications, that shall exhibit, in the lives of pious men, and the efforts of entire bodies of Christians, the true nature of Christianity, in its practical power over man.

We have long been of the opinion, that this is one of the most effectual ways of exhibiting the true nature of the Christian system. It is constantly the plan adopted in the sacred Scriptures, and we have long thought, also, that no where can

so much be found to *interest* the minds of youth as in the practical exhibition which religion has made of its power in the lives of pious men, and in the well-directed efforts of the various religious denominations, to spread Christianity through the world. Perhaps there is no way of spreading the knowledge of Christianity more rapidly and certainly, than by bringing before the youthful mind, the self-denials and sacrifices, which the true disciples of Christ have been willing to make, to lead benighted nations to the saving knowledge of the truth.

The missionary efforts of the Moravians may be regarded as among the finest illustrations that the world has seen, since the days of the apostles, of the true nature and power of simple Christianity. Of these little is known in the world. They have been eminently a class of men, who have not sought the honours of public life; who have not toiled for gold; who have been willing, for the sake of spreading the gospel, to deny themselves the comforts of ease and home, and the endearments of refined society, and to subject themselves to the privations of savage life and the toils and dangers incident to burning climes and frozen zones, for the single object of making known the Saviour among men. Though little is known of them by other Christians, yet their origin is not recent, and the world has long felt the fruits of their self-denials and their toils. The following is the account of their origin, in the work before us:

The United Brethren, or as they are more commonly called, the Moravians, whose missionary labours among the Indians of North America will form the subject of this book, are a very ancient body of Christians, and date their origin from the Greek church in the ninth century. At that time, the kings of Bulgaria and Moravia, being converted to the faith, through the labours of Methodius and Cyrillus, two Greek monks, they were, together with their subjects, united in communion with the Greek Church. Methodius was their first bishop, and for their use Cyrillus translated the scriptures into the Slavonian language. During several centuries, which preceded the reformation, the Moravians, in common with several other sects, which still preserved the true spirit of the gospel, were exposed to the fury of persecution. At the Reformation, their correspondence with Luther and Calvin and others, brought on a persecution, which, with their own religious disputes, threatened entirely to destroy their existence. In 1575, they obtained an edict for the public exercise of their religion; but in the civil war of 1612, which raged in Bohemia, they were again persecuted, and completely dispersed. One colony of these, which retained the faith in its purity, was, in 1722, conducted by a brother, named Christian David, from Fulneck, in Moravia, to Upper Lusatia, where they put themselves under the protection of Nicholas Lewis, Count of Zinzendorf, and built a village on his estate. The Count showed every kindness to the poor emigrants; but being a zealous member of the church established by law, he endeavoured to prevail upon them to unite with it. This they declined; and the Count, on a more minute inquiry into their ancient history and tenets, became himself a convert to the faith and discipline of the United Brethren.

Through his means the church was once more built up, and from his friendship with Potter and Secker, the one Archbishop of Canterbury, the other Bishop of Oxford, the Parliament of Great Britain, after mature deliberation, were brought to acknowledge the United Brethren to be a Protestant Episcopal church. Their eminent benefactor, Zinzendorf, died in the year 1760.

That which particularly characterizes the Moravians, and holds them up to the attention of others, is their missionary zeal. In this they are superior to any other body of people in the world. Their missionaries are all volunteers; for it is an inviolable maxim with them to *persuade* no man to engage in missions. Their zeal is calm, steady, and persevering. They carry their point by address, and the insinuations of modesty and mildness, which commend them to all men and give offence to none.

Their enterprising piety is shown by the amazing extent, and fearlessness of their labours, in such remote parts of the globe, and amongst the most savage of mankind. They carried the gospel to Labrador and Greenland. They also went to the East Indies, to the Russian part of Asia, and among the Hottentots of Africa. They attempted to propagate the truth in Guinea, among the slaves in Algiers, in the island of Ceylon, and in Egypt. Some of their most effective missions were among the negro slaves of the West India islands. South America also was not neglected by them; and their wonderful zeal, perseverance and devotion in the propagation of the Christian faith amongst the Aborigines of our country, their various successes, and their submission to the rod of persecution and failure, will form the interesting subject of the ensuing portion of this work.

The work before us gives an account of their labours only in one of the fields of their labour—among the Indians of the United States, and chiefly in New York and Pennsylvania. Accounts of their labours in other parts of the world, are to be presented in other volumes, by the American Sunday School Union.

Their missions to the United States commenced as early as the year 1725. Their first attempts were in Georgia, among the Creek, the Chickasaw, and the Cherokee Indians. Their efforts among the Indians in the northern states commenced in the year 1740. We take an extract from the little work before us, containing an account of the first efforts among the Indians in the province of New York.

On his return to Germany, Spangenberg gave such an account of the deplorable state of the poor Indians, that many offered to go on this mission, and one of them, Christian Henry Rauch, was sent, in 1739, from Marienborn to New-York, where he arrived July 16, 1740. He knew nothing of the Indians, nor did he even know where, and in what manner he should seek for them. In New-York, he unexpectedly met with the missionary Frederick Martin, from St. Thomas, by whom he was introduced to some pious people. These all informed him of the many well-meant, but vain attempts which had been made to christianize the Indians, and that they were so addicted to drunkenness, that no European could dwell among them.

Some days after, he heard that an embassy of Indians had arrived at New-York. He immediately went in search of them, and was rejoiced to find that some of them could speak a little of the Dutch language. These savages were ferocious in their manners, and very much intoxicated. Hav-

ing waited till they were sober, he spoke to two of them, named Tschoop and Shabasch, and asked them without ceremony, if they wished a teacher. On their replying in the affirmative, brother Rauch immediately made up his mind to accompany them, but by some accident they missed him, and proceeded on their journey.

He soon learned that they lived at Shekomeko, an Indian town, about twenty-five miles east of North River, on the borders of Connecticut, and proceeded thither immediately, where he arrived August 16, and was received after the Indian manner with much kindness. Rauch at once addressed them: "I come hither from beyond the great ocean, to bring the glad tidings, that God, the Creator, so loved us, that he became man, lived thirty years in this world, doing good to all men, and at last, for our sins, was nailed to the cross, and died for us, that we might have everlasting life. On the third day he arose again from the dead, and ascended into heaven; and though we cannot see him, he is always present, and desires only to show his love to us." They listened with attention, but he found, to his sorrow, that this doctrine, which was so new to them, excited derision, for they at last openly laughed him to scorn. Not discouraged, brother Rauch continued to preach to them, travelling from one Indian town to another, mocked and laughed at wherever he went, and suffering great hardships, because no one would receive him into his house. But his zeal and perseverance were, in the end, rewarded, for several began to listen to the truth, and Tschoop, the greatest drunkard amongst them, and afterwards Shabasch, were both convinced of their folly, and set about the work of reformation.

About this time, some white people, fearing that their interests would be injured, if the Indians became Christians, began to stir them up against Rauch, as one who only sought to deceive and mislead them, by which they were so irritated that they threatened to shoot him, and he was obliged to seek shelter in the house of a farmer of the name of Rau, to whose family he became schoolmaster. Rauch still continued, however, to make daily visits to Shekomeko, though at the hazard of his life. False accusations were circulated concerning him, in all quarters. It was even said, that he only intended to kidnap their young people to sell as slaves. Even Tschoop and Shabasch gave him up, and several white people sought an occasion to beat and abuse him. This he avoided by great caution and mild deportment. Some threatened to hang him up in the woods; others endeavoured to get the Indians to murder him in a drunken frolic. Once an Indian ran after him with his hatchet, and would doubtless have killed him, had he not stumbled and fallen into the water. Shabasch avoided him; but Tschoop, whom he cordially loved, was so hostile, that he sought an opportunity to shoot him.

The Indians, at last, began to admire his perseverance and courage, and changed their minds. He frequently spent half a day in their cottages, ate and drank with them, and even lay down to sleep amongst them, with the greatest composure. This last fact made a great impression upon them, and especially upon Tschoop. Once, observing the missionary lying in his hut, fast asleep, he confessed that he was struck with the following thought: "This man cannot be a bad man; he fears no evil, not even from us, but sleeps comfortably." In a short time after, they were convinced that all the accounts spread by the whites against the missionary, arose from malice, and confidence and friendship between Rauch and the Indians were restored. Tschoop was the first to wipe away the tears from the eyes of his former friend, and Shabasch was soon after reclaimed. The Indians of Shekomeko, and the neighbouring towns, attended the meetings regularly, and a very visible change was effected in their lives and manners.

Seldom has there been a finer illustration of the power of the gospel over a savage mind, than this. And not often has there been a more striking exhibition of the protecting providence of God. Nothing could restrain the hand of this savage, but the providence of Him who watches over his people, and who designed to bring, from this effort among the Indians, important benefits to their souls. In this instance, also, is seen the power which the gospel *may* have over the savage mind. At first they derided the missionary; then, excited by white men, they raised an open opposition to his work: they attempted his life. But his meekness, patience, and fidelity overcame all their hostility, and the most daring and desperate of them yielded to the power of the gospel, and surrendered themselves to the Son of God. It is a memorable, and most melancholy fact, that the main opposition to the gospel among the Indians in this country has been at the instigation of *white men*. In all instances, from the time of Eliott, and the Mayhews, and, indeed, from the time that our puritan fathers came to this country, till the present, it has been found, that the savage was not, by nature, *less* disposed to listen to the gospel, than any other class of men. But it was, unhappily, early found that a most lucrative traffic could be carried on with Indians; that they were easily induced to love ardent spirits; that under the influence of ardent spirits, and incited by the love of it, they would sell, at *any* sacrifice, the produce of the chase; and the effect of Christianity on their minds being to destroy this trade, and bring them to virtue and to temperance, it became the *interest* of profligate men, to oppose the introduction of the gospel among them; and no small part of the failure of missionary efforts, and of the opposition which the gospel has met among them, has been owing to the unhallowed interference of abandoned whites, seducing the Indians to drunkenness and ruin. One portion of the immense account which *this* country is to give at the bar of justice, and one fearful portion of the judgments which may await the guilty here, *as the result of the manufacture and sale of ardent spirits*, will be derived from their corrupting power over the wandering savage. No man can declare what *might* have been the destiny of the sons of the forest, but for the introduction of this liquid fire; and as for the fearful opposition, which, in consequence of this traffic, has been formed against the gospel of God, as if to accumulate all evils on the sons of the forest, the white man has not only driven him from the graves of his fathers, from his hunting and fishing grounds, from the hills where he roved, free like the doe of his own forest, but has sought to shut him out from the blessings of civilization and Christianity; to minister

poison to him, as he flies to the regions of the west; and, where he cannot directly destroy him, to seek him out with an instrument the most subtle, and polluting, and deadly, that has ever tormented and destroyed the bodies and souls of men. Had it not been for the profligate *white* man going in advance of the Christian missionary, and corrupting the Indians; had it not been that we have given them the worst of our vices, and engrafted on the terrors and wildness of a savage nature, that which changes even civilized man into a demon of evil, no one can pretend to conjecture what *might* have been *now* the condition of the Indians of these United States. Feeble they might have been; retiring still before the march of the whites; yielding state after state, and stream after stream and valley after valley, it may have been, to us. Diminishing they might have been, and retiring pensive and sad into the untrodden western forests, to hunt on other lands, and fish in other streams; but they *might* have gone under the banners of Christianity, and consoled in their labours by the consolations of a Gospel that would sustain them in their trials; and not cursing the face and the foot of the white man—set the one against them like a flint, and the other treading coldly and contemptuously on their fathers' graves; or dreading the hand stretched out to meet them in their flight with poison; and the counsels, perhaps worse than all, that declare that the nation has no power to save them from injustice and tyranny.

We have been greatly struck with the fact, in this narrative, that opposition to missions among the Indians, *by whites*, is no new thing. No small part of the difficulties into which the United Brethren have been thrown in these missions, have arisen from their interference. As instances of such interference, we make the following extracts:

But the pious labours of the missionaries created many enemies, especially among those whites who had been accustomed to make the dissolute life of the Indians, and chiefly their love of liquor, subservient to their own gain. These people were induced, by a clergyman of another persuasion, to join in the hostile measures which were taken against the brethren; and the consequence was, that the missionaries were branded with the names of papists and traitors, and brothers Mack, Sharr, and Pyrlaells, were taken up, and dragged about the country for three days, till the Governor of Connecticut, hearing the case, honourably dismissed them.

Hitherto the labour of the brethren had met with no opposition of any consequence, and in the first months of the year 1744, the church had rest, and was edified. But suddenly a persecution arose, which threatened to put an end to all their hopes and usefulness. Among the numberless false reports which were propagated concerning the brethren, the most dangerous was, that they were allied to the French in Canada, that they fomented the disputes which then took place, and intended to furnish the Indians with arms to fight against the English. These falsehoods were spread about with so much industry, that the whole country was alarmed and filled with ter-

ror. It became the duty of the magistrates to examine into the tenets and views of the brethren, and to ascertain what their real character and business were. The only fault which could be found after much scrutiny, was, that the brethren were unwilling to take an oath, although they were perfectly willing to assent to every thing contained in the oath, as also to submit to the punishment inflicted upon perjured persons, if they were found to act contrary to their assertion made by *yes* or *no*. In one of their examinations, they were called upon in open court to prove that they were privileged teachers. Buettner, produced his written vocation, and his certificate of ordination, duly signed by Bishop Nitschman, adding also that the Protestant church of the Moravian brethren had been declared by the Archbishop of Canterbury to be an episcopal and apostolical church. All these evidences being rejected, Buettner said in court to the judge, "Well, sir, since nothing will suffice, we submit, and you have power to dictate our punishment. We are subject to the magistrates, and cannot oppose them, nor would we if we could. We rather choose patiently to suffer." This address appeared to have some good effect, for they were dismissed for that time by the justice, Mr. Beckman, and even invited by the latter to dinner; but they were desired to appear again at Pikipsi, (now Poughkeepsie,) in the October following, by order of the Governor of New-York.

But the enmity of their adversaries was not extinguished. They adopted other measures, and now endeavoured to make them take oaths, or to leave the country altogether. This scheme succeeded. They obtained an act of assembly in New-York, dated October, by which all suspicious persons were enjoined to take the oath of allegiance, and in case of refusal, to be expelled the province. Another act positively forbade the brethren to instruct the Indians. On the 15th December, the sheriff and three justices of the peace arrived at Shekomeko to enforce these acts, and summoned the brethren again to Poughkeepsie, where the acts were read to Rauch and Mack, Buettner being too ill to attend. The latter wrote to Bethlehem, "We are either to depart or to incur a heavy penalty. They threaten to seize upon all we possess. We have but little, and if they take away that little, then we shall even yet have as much left as our Lord had when on earth." Amidst these heavy trials the brethren adhered to the scriptural advice, quietly to wait for the salvation of the Lord.

The Indians at Shekomeko, however, did not remove till an event happened, by which they were compelled to do so. The white people, at last, came to the resolution, that they would drive the believing Indians away by main force, under pretence that the ground belonged to other people. They accordingly seized upon the land, appointed a watch to prevent all visits from Bethlehem, whither some of the emigrants had retired, and thus reduced the congregation of Shekomeko to a situation truly distressing.

The opposition to the mission within the province of New York came at length to be so violent, that they were compelled to forsake the place where they had so long laboured, and to seek for a situation where they might pursue their toils in peace. Accordingly, the seat of their missionary labours was removed to Pennsylvania. But they were reserved for new trials. Persecution still attended them; and during the war between the French and English, in 1755, they were subjected to the trials incident to a state of hostility, and to the effects of a most unjust suspicion of being in alliance with the enemies of their country. One most melancholy effect of this state of things is presented in the following extract:

But heaven had ordained an awful visitation. On a sudden the mission house on the Mahony, which stood where Gnadenhuetten was before its removal across the river, and which at that very time was inhabited by a number of the brethren, was, late in the evening of the 24th November, attacked by the French Indians, burned, and eleven of the inmates butchered. The family were at supper, when hearing a great noise of the dogs barking, brother Senseman went to the back door to see what was the matter. On the report of a gun, several ran to open the door. The Indians stood with their pieces pointed, and as soon as the door opened, fired, by which several were wounded, and Martin Nitschman killed. His wife was wounded, but fled with many others to the garret, whither the infuriated savages pursued them, but not being able to break open the door, they set fire to the house. In the despair, terror and confusion, a few providentially escaped, by leaping from the roof and windows, and flying to some distance. The rest were all burnt alive. Of those who thus perished, seven were brethren and four sisters. This melancholy event, however, proved the saving of the congregation of Gnadenhuetten on the other side; for they heard the tumult, and saw the flames, and were enabled to make their escape.

On the 25th of November, at 3 o'clock in the morning, Zeisberger arrived at Bethlehem, and related to the whole congregation the dreadful calamity, which was listened to with deep affliction, but at the same time mingled with resignation to the will of God. Indeed, the brethren thought they could trace the special hand of a kind providence in this disastrous event, which, in permitting one evil, had graciously averted a much greater. The enemies of the gospel and of the brethren had been at work, and by cunning and malicious reports, had propagated a strong belief that the brethren were really connected with the French and the hostile Indians. So strong was this belief, that the public papers were filled with these falsehoods, and the brethren never appeared in any part of the country except at the hazard of their lives. In the Jerseys, a public declaration was made with beat of drum, that Bethlehem should be destroyed, and the most dreadful threats added, that in Bethlehem, Gnadenhuetten, and other places, a carnage should be made, such as had never before been heard of in North America. But after the massacre of the brethren became generally known, the eyes of the people began to be opened, and hundreds of persons visited the settlement and saw the mangled and burnt corpses of the brethren and sisters. Thus their innocence and the untruth of the reports which were circulated against them, were made manifest to all, and the wisdom of Heaven saw fit to adopt this plan, though painful, to save his people from the more extensive destruction with which they were threatened.

The situation of the brethren had now become very critical. The savages insisted upon their taking up arms against the English, threatening to murder them in case of refusal. Moreover, a set of fanatics sprung up, who demanded the total extirpation of the Indian tribes, lest God's vengeance should fall upon the Christians for not destroying them, as the Israelites by his command had destroyed the Canaanites of old. These people were greatly exasperated against Bethlehem, on account of the protection and assistance given to a race of beings, deemed by them accursed. But the brethren continued to put their trust in God, who they knew was able to deliver them from all their enemies, and their courage in remaining in their settlements proved a comfort and protection to the neighbours. If they had fled, the whole country to Philadelphia would have been exposed to the murderous savages. The brethren, however, neglected nothing which was necessary to their safety and defence; hundreds of persons took refuge within their entrenchments, and government considered their settlements as a bulwark for the defence of the country. The savages continued to lay waste the neighbourhood, and the flames from plundered villages in the vicinity could often be distinctly seen

at Bethlehem. The wretches even approached very near the place, lurking about with torches, and trying to set fire to the thatched roofs, by shooting wadding on fire upon them. Once, even in the day time, a party of them came to attack a large field, in which about forty sisters were picking flax, whom they intended to carry off as prisoners. But perceiving a strong guard of Indian brethren with their guns ready, they retreated, while the congregation thanked God that they had not been obliged to shed the blood of their enemies, which they certainly must have done, had they attacked the women and children. Not long afterwards, the greater part of the savages, at the instance of one of their chiefs, who was friendly to the brethren, returned home, and the few who remained, not thinking themselves a match for the guard, dispersed.

With one other extract, exhibiting the effect of this opposition to their labours, we shall conclude our notice of this interesting little work.

On the 19th of October, a harmless Indian, of the name of Renatus, was seized as the murderer of one of the Irish settlers, and his person being even sworn to by the widow, he was dragged to Philadelphia and imprisoned. This report, which was founded in falsehood, spread far and wide, and the rage of the whites rose to such a pitch, that an express arrived from Philadelphia, bringing an order, that all the baptized Indians of Nain and Wech-quetank should be brought to the city for protection from the authorities.

It was an affecting sight to behold these poor persecuted people, proceeding patiently upon this sad pilgrimage, and not knowing what fate might await them. The sick, the aged, and the little children were conveyed in wagons, and the rest on foot. The roads were heavy from rain. Some were exhausted from fatigue. And they were compelled to suffer the malice of the white people along their route, who loaded them with abuse and cursing. When they at length reached the barracks in Philadelphia, where, by order of government they were to be lodged, the soldiers forcibly refused them admittance; they were detained in the street for five hours, and the mob which gathered round them reviled them, charging them with all the outrages committed by the savages, and threatened to kill them on the spot; which they certainly would have done, had the Indians returned evil for evil.

To extricate them from the fury of the misguided mob, it was resolved to conduct them from Philadelphia to some place of safety. As they passed through the streets, thousands followed like ravenous wolves prowling around sheep, till they reached Province Island, about six miles below the city, where, with the assistance of their missionaries, they settled as well as circumstances would permit.

While the persecuted congregation were returning thanks to the Almighty for their safety, a deed of horror was perpetrated in the village of Conestoga by a party of fifty-seven monsters from the town of Paxton. These wretches are commonly known by the name of the "Paxton boys." They attacked a party of inoffensive Indians, who had long lived quietly among the white people, and butchered fourteen of them. The rest fled to Lancaster, where the magistrates protected, and lodged them in the work house, a strong building and well secured. They were, however, followed by the murderers, who marched into the town at noon day, broke into the work house, and though the Indians begged their lives on their knees, yet these barbarians cruelly murdered them all, throwing their mangled bodies into the street. They then departed with a dreadful shout of victory, threatening that the Indians in Province Island should share the same fate.

The government now resolved to send the persecuted Indians to the English army by the way of New York. Preparations were made, and a party of seventy Highlanders, under Captain Robertson, appointed for their escort.

In all places, but especially in the towns through which their path lay, the mob insulted the Indians; but they arrived safely at Amboy, where two sloops were ready to convey them to New York. They were just ready to go on board on the 11th of January, 1764, when strict orders came from New York, forbidding a single Indian to put his foot on their territories. Information was immediately sent to Philadelphia of their situation, and a new guard of 170 men from General Gage's army was sent to convey them back. During their route they suffered dreadfully from cold, for it was the depth of winter. Near New Brunswick they were in great danger in passing over the ice, and the infirm and aged were obliged to creep over the frozen rivers upon their hands and feet. At last they arrived in Philadelphia, and were lodged in the barracks.

On the 4th December, 1764, peace was once more proclaimed, and the brethren at Bethlehem seriously considered, in what manner to provide a settlement for the believing Indians, where they might enjoy more safety. The Indians who had been so long in the barracks, after a troublesome journey, arrived at Nain, whence, as soon as the necessary arrangements could be made, they were to set off for the Wyalusing on the Susquehannah. Wagons were provided, but their journey was attended by numberless difficulties. They were often obliged to make long circuits to avoid the enmity of many white people. They also met with stormy weather and snow, and were obliged to keep up fires all night in the woods. Hunting was their chief support. They carried the loads which were put in the wagons, over the hills, in small parcels. In some parts they cut their way for miles through the woods. The brethren waded and swam across brooks and rivers; but for the women and children they cut down trees and constructed rafts with great labour. In some places they were compelled to encamp on the banks, till they could build canoes. They also suffered from hunger. When their whole stock of provisions failed, they were reduced to live upon wild potatoes, and even the bark of trees. They had frequently no other drink but the muddy water they found in puddles. Some died upon the journey. But during all these afflictions, they never lost their cheerfulness and resignation, and when at last they arrived at Wyalusing, on the 9th May, after a journey of five weeks, they forgot all their pain and trouble, for joy that they had reached the place of their future abode.

Thus ended in 1765, the painful pilgrimage of the Indian congregation, which commenced with their flight from Wechquetank and Nain in 1763: and all declared, with one accord, that unless God had spread his wings over them, they never would have lived to see that happy day. Unto him, therefore, they gave all the glory.

As an impressive and affecting exhibition, therefore, of the practical power of the Christian religion, in producing ardent love for the souls of men; in prompting to great self-denials and sacrifices; in sustaining the soul in the midst of persecution and affliction, we recommend the book to the notice of our readers. We believe that the United Brethren have fallen on just conceptions of the nature of the Christian religion; and, as the church advances towards the glory of the Millenium, we doubt not, that it will imbibe more and more of the spirit of the self-denying, the humble, and the unpretending Moravians. We believe that more and more Christians will feel it their duty and privilege to labour on the great principle which is the life and soul of their organization; that men are to toil to secure the means of sustaining those, who, in Pagan lands, de-

vote their lives to the spread of the Gospel; and that the church will yet see that the main design, and the chief benefit of *wealth*, is to furnish the means of doing good, and of carrying the Gospel around the globe. Acting on this simple principle, the Moravians have done more, to convey the Gospel to the benighted minds of Pagans, than all other Christians, since they commenced their self-denying toils; and are now carrying forward their efforts with an untiring zeal that is not exhibited by any other denomination of Christians on the face of the earth.

We commend such books to the attention of children. We desire that they may have a place in Sunday School libraries. If men are ever to learn what Christianity is, it will be by what they hear, and read, and see of it, in early life. And as we firmly believe that the Christianity of the age that is to succeed this, is to be marked, and graduated, by the kind of conceptions of it that shall find their way into Sabbath Schools of *this age*, we seek that the rising generation may know, from actual exhibition, what the Christian religion is; and what is to be expected of those who are soon to take the place of their fathers in the sanctuary—at the altars of God, and in the advancing, and progressively triumphant enterprise of carrying the Gospel around the globe.

ANNIVERSARY HYMN.

O God, though throned in glory
'Mid heaven's angelic throngs,
Casting their crowns before thee
With everlasting songs:
Thy goodness yet rejoices
Love's humblest notes to hear;
May then our feeble voices
Attract thy gracious ear.

Accept our adoration,
That breathing freedom's air,
Our lot is in a nation
Which knows thy guardian care—
That round us vale and mountain
With smiling plenty teem;
That knowledge pours its fountain,
And truth its hallowed stream.

Mercies, like manna, falling
With every morning's dew;
Mid all, thy gospel calling
To joys for ever new:
O who, of all the living,
More grateful hymns should raise!
Then, be each word thanksgiving,
And every action praise.

And let thy grace descending
 Not on our hearts in vain,
 But, with each purpose blending,
 Ascend in love again
 To thee, whose breath, as showers
 Of spring renew the earth,
 Awake to glorious flowers
 The seed of heavenly birth.

The fulness of thy favour
 Pour down on them, we pray,
 Who to thy fold, O Saviour,
 Restore us when we stray:
 Their works rewarded double,
 O let them prove thy love,
 Their sun and shield in trouble,
 Their crown of life above.

Still be thy gospel spreading
 Abroad its wings of light—
 Wherever man is treading
 The paths of death and night:
 From nation on to nation,
 Extend its righteous sway,
 Till the last desolation
 Of sin, be swept away. [*Muhlenberg.*]

ART. VII.—TEACHERS' MEETINGS.

To the Editor of the Sunday School Quarterly Magazine.

SIR:—It is, I doubt not, in the experience of every man who has had the superintendence of a Sunday School, that frequent and efficient Teachers' Meetings are indispensable to a prosperous condition of the School. And yet it is not always easy to conduct these meetings so as to render them interesting and useful to all the varieties of character that are to be found among the teachers. A teacher who is daily impressed with the responsibilities and duties of his office, will continue to attend regularly, notwithstanding he may fail to obtain all the enjoyment and advantage from these meetings that he might desire. But we find in practice, unhappily, that many become irregular in their attendance, whenever, from any cause, the interest of the meeting declines. Hence, the manner in which Teachers' Meetings should be conducted, is a question of no small importance to the success of Sunday School instruction.

Undoubtedly, different modes must be adopted under different circumstances, and in different states of society, and of religious character and feeling. And it is for those who have the management of them, to judge of these different circumstances as applicable to their own situation. It may always be useful, however, to know what methods have been successful with others. This consideration has induced me to com.

municate to you a short account of the plan we have adopted, for several months past, in the School with which I am connected; since it has given more interest, and, we think, profitable interest, to our meeting, than any we have before tried.

In the first place, I should remark, that ours is strictly a parochial school. Our minister always attends the school when his other engagements will permit, and generally the Teachers' Meetings. Although he does not act as the superintendent, yet, by having the chief direction of the lessons, and being always consulted in the selection of the teachers, he is virtually, as he was designed to be, at the head of the school. Our lessons are always portions of Scripture, so selected as to constitute somewhat of a systematic course of study. The lessons for the two or three following Sundays (according to the number of each that are expected to intervene before each meeting) are assigned as affording topics of discussion for the meeting. On these the teachers write short essays, which are handed to the minister, or, if he is absent, to the Superintendent, in such a manner that no one, but he, knows who is the author of each. All are invited to write, and none are compelled; but all are expected to have studied the subjects, so as to be able to take the greater interest in the discussion. These essays, or so many as there is time for, are read by the minister, and he closes with some remarks of his own, correcting any errors that he may have observed, and enforcing the practical lessons that the subjects may have developed.

The meetings are, of course, opened and closed with prayer. I enclose one of the essays that was read on one of these occasions, which you may print or not, as you may think best. The text of Scripture on which it is founded made a part of one of the regular lessons in course.

A SUPERINTENDENT.

—
Luke, xvii. 1. *It is impossible but that offences will come; but wo unto him through whom they come.*

What are the offences spoken of in this passage? Not the excitement of anger, as when we speak of giving offence, nor the commission of a crime, or offence against the laws. From a parallel passage in the other evangelists, it appears that our Saviour was speaking of obstacles thrown in the way of some who were disposed to come to him for salvation, by those who professed to be his disciples. The conduct, therefore, of whatever nature it may be, which becomes a hindrance to the salvation of others, particularly of the young, to whom the conversation primarily refers, is the offence of which he speaks. And he by whom the offence cometh, is he who perverts the influence which he might have exerted in leading them to Jesus, and deters them from coming to him.

But why is it impossible for any to avoid doing this? Has God rendered it impossible for us to refrain from sin, and then made us accountable for the sins we commit? Surely not: the impossibility is not physical, but moral. As we are not compelled to act wrong, so, neither are we compelled, by absolute force, to act right. "Force upon free will hath no place here." Motives of sufficient power are set before us, and divine aid is afforded to those who seek it. But such is the exceeding sinfulness of the human heart, that with all these helps, some will fall away, who had made a profession of godliness, and thus become a stumbling block, and a rock of offence: and it cannot be otherwise, unless God had been pleased to change the whole nature of man, or change the whole character of his dealings with him as an accountable being. The necessity, therefore, springs entirely from our own free agency, and is of the same kind with that spoken of by St. Paul, when he says to the Corinthians, (1 Cor. xi. 19,) "There must be also heresies among you, that they which are approved may be made manifest among you."

This view of the subject presents a very impressive lesson to us as teachers of a Sunday School. The "little ones" who may be offended, deprived of the hope of everlasting life, by our misconduct or unfaithfulness, are the children especially committed to our instruction and guidance. We not only act in regard to their religious cultivation, in the place of their parents, but we stand between them as their instructor and their pastor. They are entrusted to us, that we may lead them in the way of salvation. Oh! what will be our responsibility if we become an offence to them, and keep them back from the way of life. It is not to be supposed that it would cause any material change in the doctrines which we teach, if we should arouse to a more faithful and zealous devotion to the duties of our office. But if we should come to our instructions with hearts filled with a deeper sense of the infinite importance of these heavenly truths, and overflowing with ardent desires and fervent prayers for the salvation of these children, might we not expect to see the effect exhibited among the children in a more earnest heed to the things of their everlasting peace?

There is another consideration—our station in the school places us in a situation to exert an important influence, either for good or for evil, upon the whole parish. Thirty persons, if united in their object, are enough to give an impulse to the religious character of any parish. But our relation to the children of the parish brings us into contact with most of the families in it, and gives us an opportunity for exerting a silent, perhaps a powerful, influence, in direct assistance to the efforts

of our minister. But we are selected for this duty because we are supposed to be peculiarly impressed with its importance; and, however we may shrink from the responsibility which the remark implies, we cannot escape from the consequences of it. If, therefore, we content ourselves with a sluggish performance of our duties, such as would proceed from a feeble sense of the infinite importance of the truths we teach, and from a cold and heartless zeal in our master's cause, then we not only endanger the souls of our scholars, but upon us must rest much of the responsibility, if others should have such low and inadequate views of religion, as to be insufficient to withdraw them from the pursuits and pleasures of the world.

Oh! may God grant that none of us may be the means by which such offences must come; that this awful wo may not fall upon us.

ART. VIII.—SWARTZ.

The Life of Christian Frederick Swartz, an early missionary to India, has been on our catalogue several years. A few months since, a new biography appeared in Great Britain, but on a critical examination, it was found that every thing of importance or peculiar interest had been preserved in our sketch.

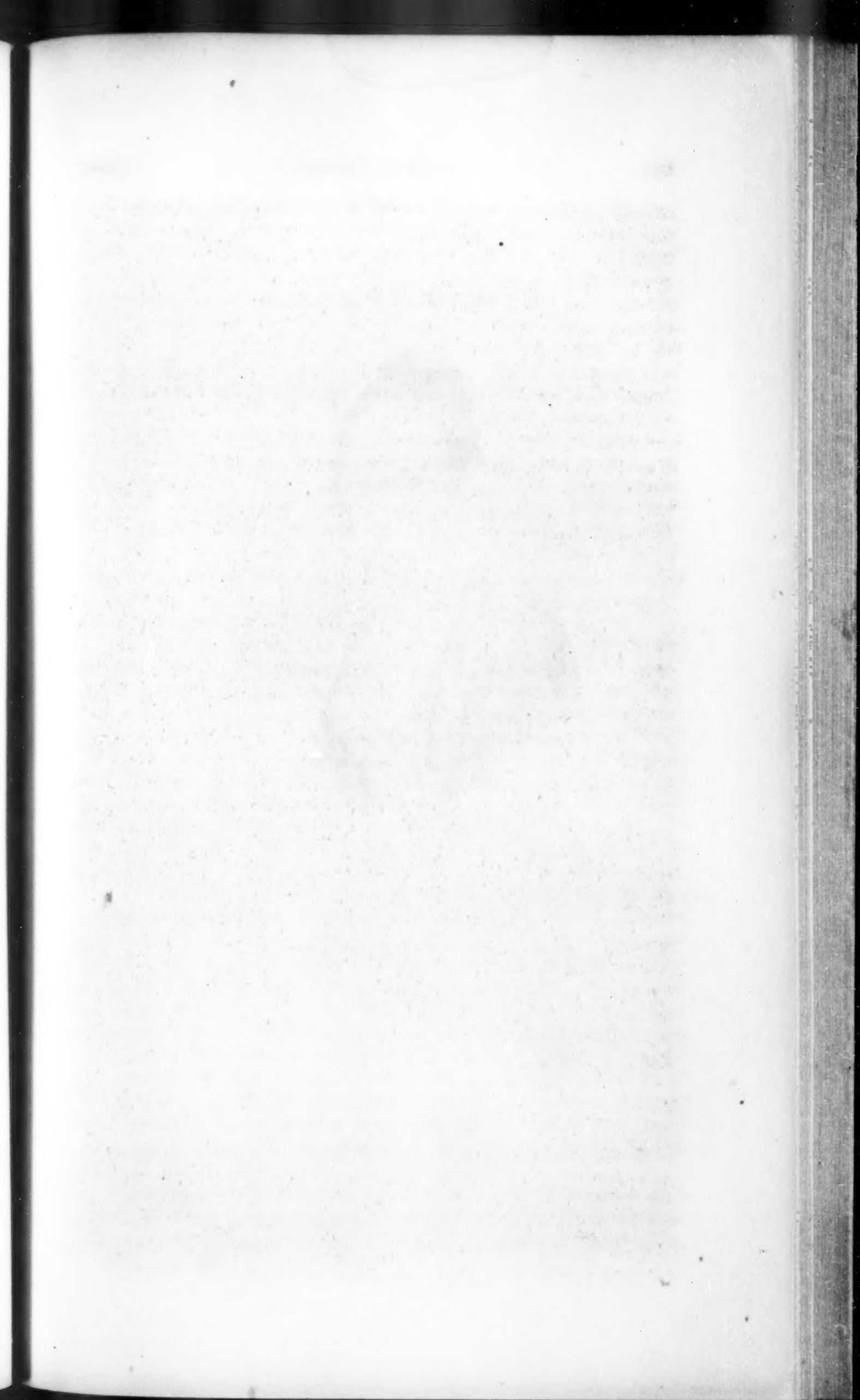
The *Rev. Mr. Winslow*, one of our American missionaries, visited the grave of the venerable man in 1829, and has furnished some interesting notices of his domestic habits, his burial place, and of the monument erected by the Rajah of Tanjore over his remains. Copious extracts from Mr. Winslow's journal have been subjoined to our book, and a fine portrait of Swartz has been prefixed. This portrait has been selected to embellish the present number of the Magazine.

We can now recommend this little volume to our readers as a very just exhibition of the character of one of the most apostolic men the world has ever known. One who was revered by Christian, Mohammadan, and Hindoo, and whose integrity and purity were so conspicuous, as to make him the chosen medium of political negotiation between the princes of India and the British government.

Discontinuance of the Magazine.

The Board have decided on the discontinuance of this Magazine, at the close of the current volume. The expenses attending its publication are very heavy, and the Sunday School Journal is so generally preferred, that the circulation of the Magazine has become almost nominal. The fourth and last number may be expected on the thirty-first day of December.

It may be found expedient to publish annually a collection of documents in the form of *Sunday School Annals*, and if so, due notice will be given.





HARRIET NEWELL.

American Sunday School Union.